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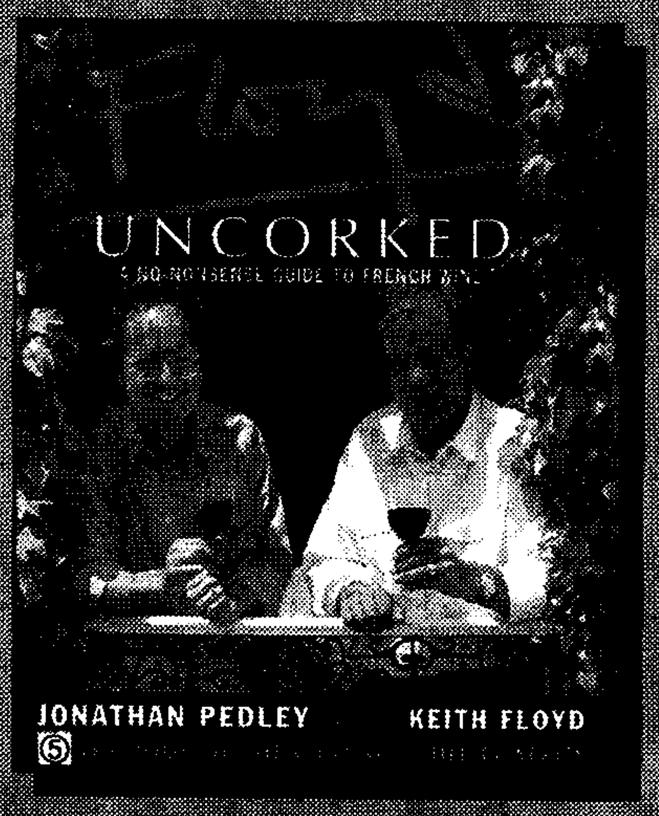


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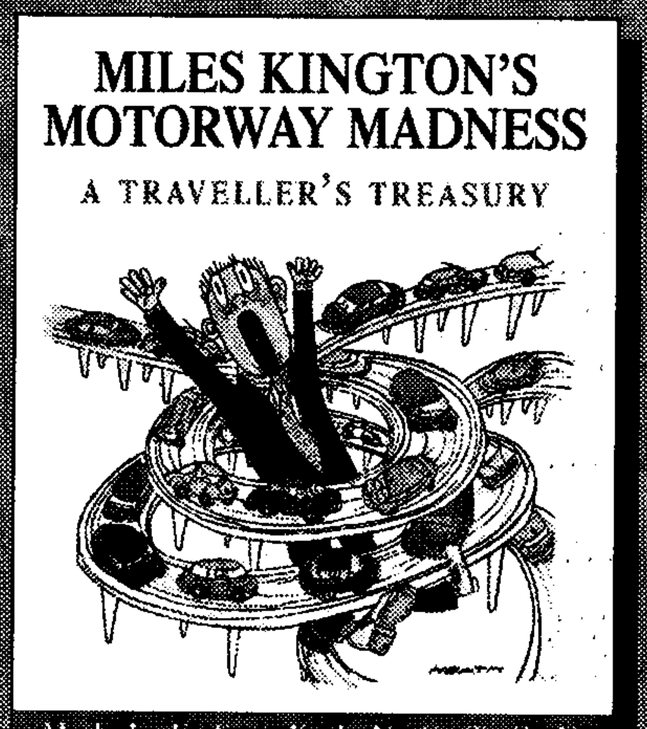


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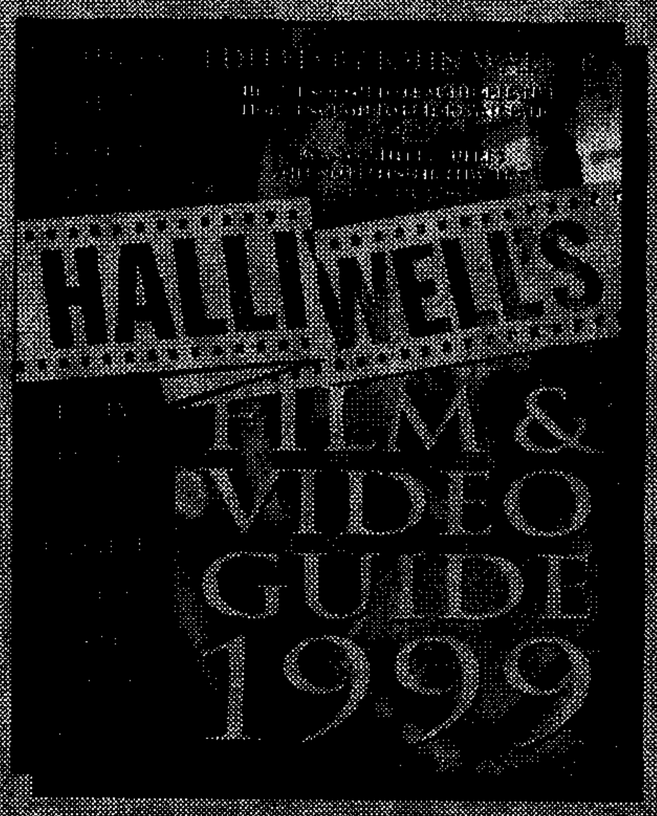


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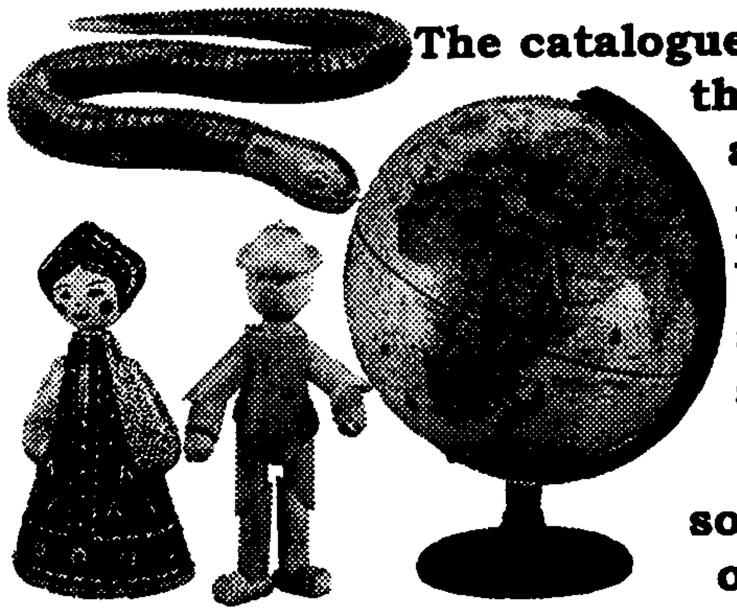

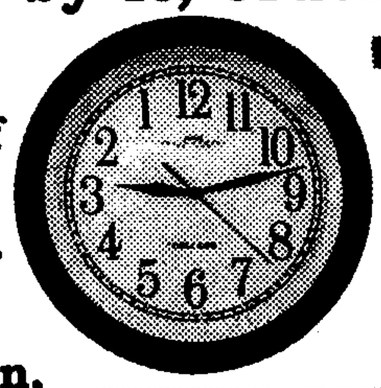

**The catalogue has been described as "a mixture of things you thought had gone for ever and things you didn't know existed".**

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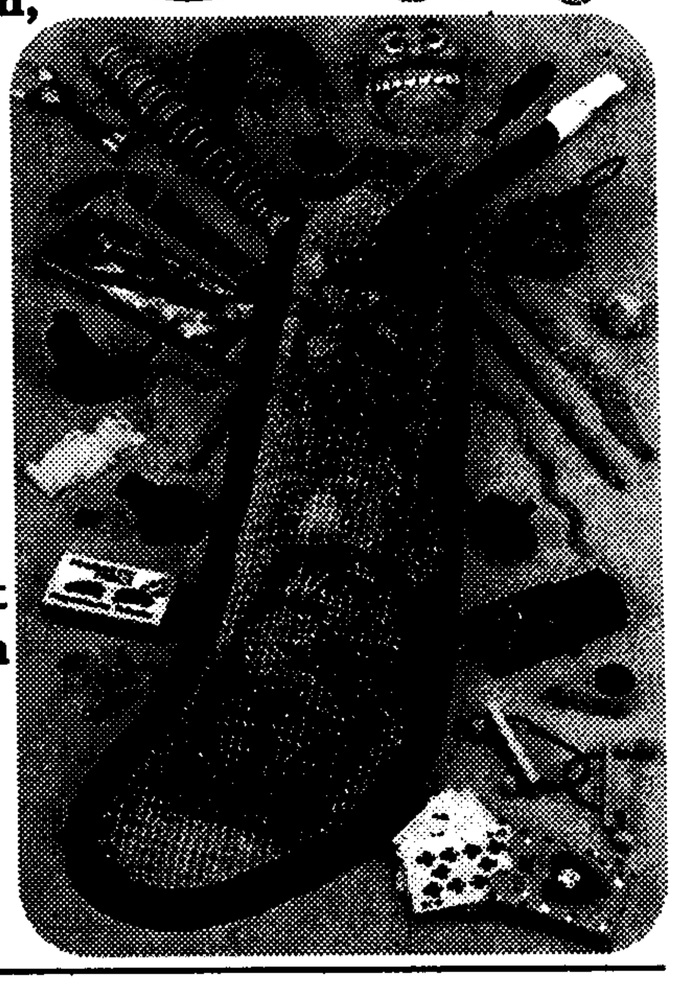
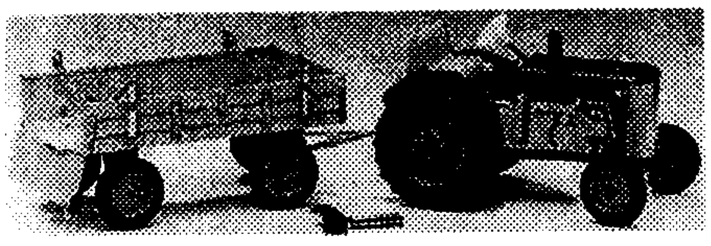


**Its fifty fully-illustrated pages offer some six hundred items, ranging from old-fashioned stocking-fillers costing a few pence to expensive scientific oddities (it being, for instance, the only UK supplier of the astonishing Euler's Disc).**



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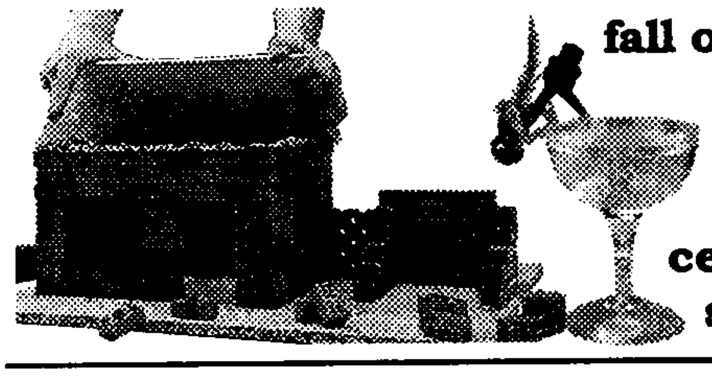

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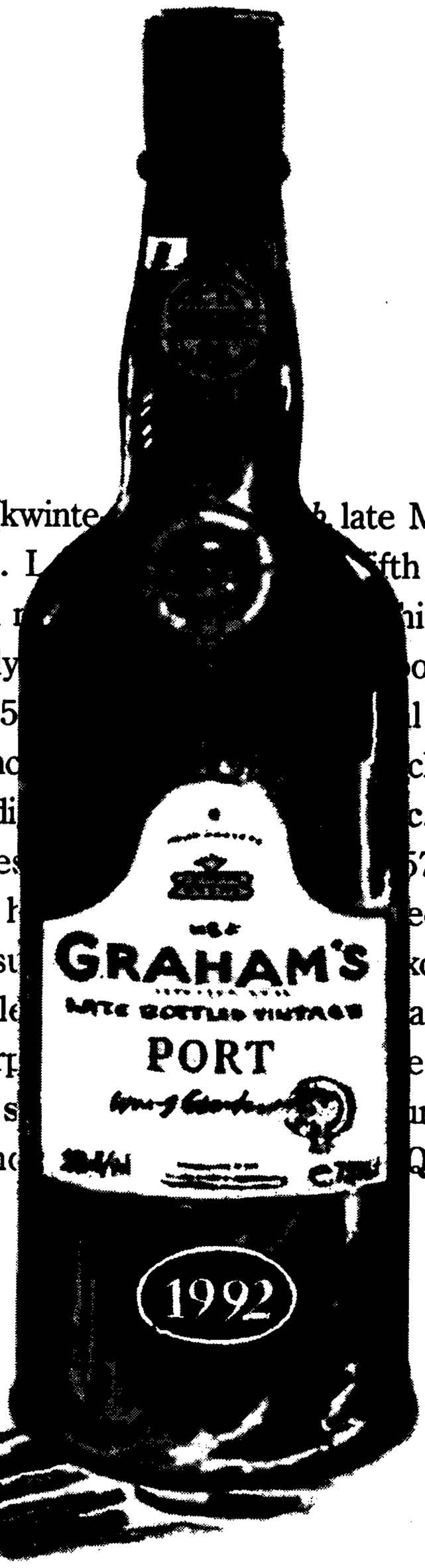


**Quintessence** (kwinte … late ME. [- Fr. *quintessence,* †*quinte essence* - med. L … fth essence.] **1.** The 'fifth essence'of ancient and … hilosophy, the substance of which the heavenly … odies were composed. **b.** The cats whiskers 15 … l part of any substance; a highly refined essenc … chemistry, an alcoholic tincture obtained by di … **c.** The purest or most perfect form or manifes … 570. **d.** The bees knees **e.** Consummate; of the h … ection or completeness. Model of excellence, su … xcellent person or thing. **f.** impeccable; Not liable … aultless. **g.** King pin **h.** Sublime; exalted, surp … e as to inspire awe or wonder. **i.** The top dog. s … ure of a q.; the purest or most refined of its kin … **Quintesse-ntially** *adv.*

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# THE DAILY Gnome

## The Story They Tried To Gag

WHEN the seventh in line to the throne develops a temperature of 98.5° — then that is a story of immense national importance.

It is clearly in the public interest that full details of Prince Harry's possible impending death are made known to every man, woman and child in the country.

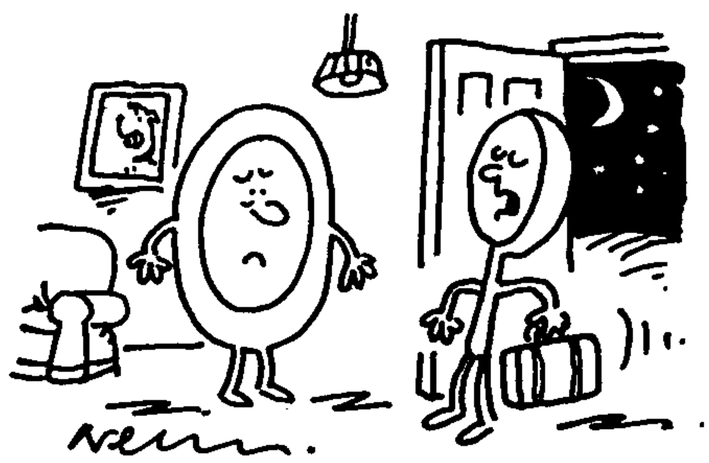
We have a free press in Britain, something the Royal Family should remember when they complain that the Gnome has no right to divulge the true story of Prince Harry's near fatal temperature catastrophe.

We stand by the story we didn't quite print on Monday and our brave decision to publish an uncensored photo of a thermometer of the type that may have been placed in the prince's mouth as he battled courageously with his life and death struggle against his potentially terminal illness.

We at the Gnome support the Monarchy. But we also support the freedom to sell newspapers. That is why we respectfully say to Prince Charles:

"Belt up Big Ears or there will be more dirt on you."

MR P. MORON, Editor, The Daily Gnome



*"I'm leaving you for a Delia Smith omelette pan"*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# COLOUR SECTION

**A CONTROVERSIAL figure in the Scott report on arms to Iraq was HDES — Head of the Defence Export Services.**

As part of the Thatcher regime's determination to put the machinery of government entirely at the disposal of arms dealers, a leading arms manufacturer was enticed from his company into the ministry of defence to supervise all arms exports. These appointments led to a series of embarrassing conflicts of interest as HDES found himself lobbying in the MoD for his company's products.

Some deranged idealists imagined that "new" Labour would put a stop to this. But not so. On 10 November defence secretary George Robertson announced the appointment of the next HDES. He is Tony Edwards, director of the TI group, known to devotees of the Scott inquiry as the owners of Matrix Churchill, celebrated provider of machine tools to equip the armed forces of Saddam Hussein.

Edwards is the chief executive of Dowty, one of the TI's main subsidiaries. The current TI annual report discloses that Dowty Aerospace is engaged in "150 military operations worldwide". These operations can expect full support from the head of defence export sales at the ministry. As a civil servant, Mr Edwards will be entirely independent of his company. As proof of that, his salary will be paid by the government. He will get £165,000, plus a rather miserable bonus, no more than £15,000. Obviously a man of his experience can't survive on that sort of money. So the secretary of state explained: "In addition, the Defence Industries Council, acting on behalf of the defence industry as a whole, will provide a top-up element so that Mr Edwards's basic remuneration package will remain on a par with what he is currently receiving from TI Group plc".

How much would that be? The current TI Group accounts show Mr Edwards's basic salary in 1997 as £315,000, plus a cash payment under the directors "long term incentive scheme" (£78,000), plus a bonus (£79,000), which help to bring that "basic remuneration package" up to £489,000. In other words, the independent HDES will be getting a maximum of £180,000 from the government, and a minimum of £300,000 from the defence industry.

PS: A prominent member of the Defence Industries Council last year was, er, Mr Tony Edwards.

**THERE was a monumental cock-up on the branch line between Coventry and Leamington on 23 June when a high speed train was mis-routed on to a "loop" where it could have smashed into a stationary train.**

Shocked inspectors from the health and safety executive (HSE) judged the cock-up as potentially serious as those which led to the 1988 Clapham disaster. On 12 November the HSE sent notices that it would be prosecuting Railtrack and its two contractors on the line, Jarvis Fastline and GT Railway Maintenance, and that the case would start at Mid-Warwickshire magistrates court, Leamington, on 17 November.

Only two matters were decided on that day. The case was postponed until 5 January. And Jarvis Fastline insisted on changing the name under which it was prosecuted to just Fastline. This was accepted by the HSE and the court.

Thus when the case comes to court it will be much harder to connect Fastline with the burgeoning construction combine Jarvis, which has scooped so many contracts from Railtrack — and which "sponsored" such a successful meeting for the environment, transport and regions secretary of state and deputy prime minster John Prescott at the Labour party conference.

**MOST of the newspapers saw last week's decision by the crown prosecution service (CPS) to drop robbery charges against Donald Fearon, aka "Boogie", the man Ron Davies met near Clapham Common, as a huge embarrassment for the disgraced former Welsh secretary.**

Davies's various accounts to police were so contradictory that, in the absence of other prosecution witnesses, the CPS believed his testimony would not stand up as reliable in court. Quite so. But no doubt Ron breathed a sigh of relief at not having to go into a witness box and answer questions under oath about what he was really up to that night. Nevertheless he could yet, however unwillingly, have his day in court.

As reported in *Eye* 963, when Ron and Boogie arrived at the block of flats in Somerleyton Road, Brixton, in search of a gay prostitute on the night of Monday 26 October, they met two other men, friends of Boogie, in the foyer of the flats. Ron Davies was robbed as all four men ascended in the lift. So what happened to the other two men?

After the robbery one of them made off with Ron Davies's credit cards. As soon as the shops opened on Tuesday morning — as Ron was preparing for his resignation meeting with Tony Blair and before the story had broken in the newspapers — this man went on a spending spree in the stores of south London and ran up a substantial bill on Ron's cards. After the story broke and the villain realised this was no ordinary mugging he had taken part in, he panicked when he realised he had been recorded using Ron's cards on several stores' security cameras.

The man was subsequently questioned by police and released without being charged for the time being. The existence of the security videos, however, means that he can be matched with the transactions on Davies's credit card statements — evidence above and beyond the unreliable word of Ron. The CPS, therefore, has no excuse not to bring this man to court. Should he then plead not guilty, Ron Davies will after all be obliged to answer questions under oath.


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# Street of Shame

**WHILE *Sun* hacks struggle to adjust to their boss's sudden U-turn in favour of gay rights, colleagues at the *News of the Screws* are grappling with another painful issue — consensual sado-masochism.**

Last month the *Screws* ran a two-page piece about the "sick lust" of a Sussex woman who dumped her husband to run off with Keith Wynn, known to his chums as "Master Keith". Sparing its readers no details, the *Screws* whipped up a storm over the "club nights" for S&M fans run by Master Keith at a wine bar in north London. "There was debauchery everywhere," it revealed.

The usual Sunday-morning fare for *Screws* readers, in other words. But the follow-up a week later was most unusual: a large apology headed "Sorry to all Our Fetish Friends". Noting that the press officer of SM Pride, Barry Slemmings, had threatened to take the paper to the Press Complaints Commission, the *Screws* announced: "If Mr Slemmings and his pals reckon we've misrepresented a night of pain, fetishism and outlandish, macabre torture in any way, we'd like to say sorry."

Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that Barry Slemmings once shared an office at the *Dagenham Post* with a young hack called Phil Hall, who now edits the *News of the Screws*.

Hall's apology wasn't entirely sincere, of course: he repeated the official Murdoch line that people who cavort around in dimly-lit dens while wearing rubber and leather are clearly abnormal weirdos. Slemmings and other "fetish friends" were thus surprised to note that *British Sex* on Sky One two weeks later featured a gay man's cruising guide to the outdoor S&M and fist-fucking available on Hampstead Heath — what to do, where to go, what the dress and hankie codes are, etc, etc. The programme was made by BSkyB and sponsored, at every commercial break, by that famous bastion of wholesome family values — the *News of the Screws*.

**PHIL HALL, the West Ham fan who edits the *News of the World*, has been telling friends of an argument with the editor of the *Guardian* at a party two weeks ago.**

"I nearly chinned that ghastly Rusbridger," he boasts. "But he ran away." Is this really any way for two such eminent grandees from the Fourth Estate to behave?

***SUN* editor David Yelland certainly can't make up his mind about his paper's attitude to gay people.**

Yelland recently appeared as star speaker at the Guild of Editors' annual bash in Cambridge, and, sharing a top table with Press Complaints Commission director Guy Black and enemy-of-the-tabloids Clive Soley MP, the bald eagle was at his sanctimonious best. "I didn't come into journalism to ruin people's lives," he confided, before going on to admit, "there have been times in the past when the *Sun* has done things that were wrong." Heaven forfend!

But all that was in the past — especially where gays were concerned, he declared. "The country has changed, the soaps all have gay characters, and a friend of my family has come out in the last few years — nobody hates him because of it." Doubtless this unnamed friend was overjoyed to read the *Sun*'s subsequent "gay mafia" coverage.

**THE *Sun* told the rest of the media it had to sack Geoffrey Boycott because: "Our readers would find repugnant the idea of us employing someone with a conviction for violence against a woman".**

This statement will ring alarm bells with *Eye* readers who recall that the tabloid boasts one John Kay on its writing staff. Kay's claim to notoriety is that he once served time for killing his wife.

**WHEN the *Grauniad*'s media commentator Roy Greenslade returned to rehash one of his favourite themes last week — the inexorable decline of the so-called "red top tabloids" — the former *Daily Mirror* editor missed a far more interesting story under his nose.**

The circulation chart accompanying his piece revealed that sales of the *Grauniad*, at 393,856 in October (down 4.46 per cent year-on-year) have slipped below what media pundits such as Greenslime call the "psychologically important" 400,000 mark for the first time.

The *Guardian* in October sold just 8,993 copies more than the *Financial Times* (up 11.7 per cent on a year ago). If current trends continue, the *FT* will soon be out-selling the *Graun*. Not a bad media story. But for Greenslade's readers it was a case of no *FT*, no comment.

## JUST FANCY THAT!

"What is the point of releasing 22 hours of Monica Lewinsky tapes?... Will it make Monica a star? Hardly. These tapes are not going to make a Christmas hit. They are the ramblings and infatuations of a silly young woman."

— Leading article, the *Mirror*, Wednesday 18 November.

"To Hear Monica's Voice Just Dial 0660 000 789. Calls cost 50p per minute".

— Page 7, the *Mirror*, Wednesday 18 November.

*"How dare he make fools of us — that's our job"*

**MICHAEL GREEN, chairman of Carlton Communications, is a close friend and shooting chum of London *Evening Standard* editor Max "Hitler" Hastings. He is also, as it happens, a partner in the new On-Digital service.**

Nevertheless Hitler fearlessly went ahead and published a full-page article by Andrew Billen slagging off On-Digital ("Why I Say NO to ON") in the *Standard* of 16 November.

However, the piece appeared only in the first edition before disappearing without trace. When hacks from *Broadcast* magazine rang to inquire about this vanishing act, they were rewarded with a letter from Hitler himself.

"I was dismayed that no other space was found for Billen's piece in later editions," he revealed. "I give you this explanation in order to make it crystal clear that I shall take legal proceedings in the event that anything appears to suggest that I intervened in the *Evening Standard*'s news reporting because of personal friendships. This is about as damaging an allegation that anyone could make about an editor and I would feel that I had no choice other than to pursue it ruthlessly."

As many a grouse and pheasant can testify, the sight of Max in ruthless pursuit is awesome indeed.

## GREAT CORRECTIONS OF OUR TIME

"Yesterday subscribers to the *Fiver*, an email bulletin service from the *Guardian*'s football website, received a stray email. This was caused by a technical problem with our mailing list. The message, sent by a reader seeking to cancel his subscription, ended with the words, `Just fuck off'. This would normally have been seen by just a handful of people within the *Guardian*'s New Media Department, but regrettably it was automatically sent to all subscribers."

– *Guardian*

**FINANCIAL times are hard, it seems, at the *Financial Times*, where hacks have been told to expect no more than a 1 percent rise next year — an effective pay *cut* of 2 to 3 per cent in real terms.**

A memo from managing editor Robin Pauley explains: "We shall continue to put less emphasis on the base salary and it should not be assumed that base salaries will necessarily rise by inflation, even in years when the paper is doing well."

The reason for this parsimony, explains Pauley, is that *FT* hacks now have a splendid four other sources of income, apart from their basic pay. First, there are the one-off "merit bonuses" beloved of brown-nosers, which rarely amount to more than £600 a year after tax; second, there is the *FT*'s "profit sharing" scheme, which pays out token amounts of free shares if the *FT*'s results are exceptionally good; third, a similar Pearson scheme which has only just been set up and which is unlikely to pay anything in the foreseeable future; and lastly — the biggest slap in the face — the Pearson save-as-you-earn share scheme under which hacks can gamble taxed income by buying Pearson shares at a discount to the market price.

Pauley does not mention free lottery tickets or scratchcards, but disillusioned hacks think they cannot be far behind.

**THE departure of red-faced tippler Phil Walker from the editor's chair at the Daily Star has been presented in the trade press as an act of selfless heroism: he resigned, so it is said, rather than obey an order to sack dozens of hacks.**

How odd, then, that the last time he was asked to fire half his staff he did so gleefully.

The truth is that Walker – a man for whom every day is red-nose day – had been drinking in the Last Chance Saloon for too long, especially since the arrival of puritanical Lord "Alco" Hollick as his boss. As a colleague reveals: "Phil was finally told that the game was up". He will now retire to Norfolk to enjoy his two favourite pastimes, boozing and birdwatching, in the company of his charming wife Sharon Ring, who recently made an equally abrupt exit from the editorship of *OK!* magazine.

Walker's successor, Peter "Thrush" Hill, wasted no time in carrying out the purges ordered by milord Bollick. First to go was long-serving assistant editor Mike Hellicar, who was sacked via a message on his answering machine from personnel director Sue Brader. Features production editor Brian Dunlea was then called in by la Brader to receive his marching orders – whereupon the following conversation took place.

*Brader:* Well, Brian, you're 54 years old now.

*Dunlea (puzzled):* No, I'm 52.

*Brader:* And you've had a long innings – all those years working in the sports department.

*Dunlea (even more puzzled):* I've never worked in sports.

Alas! It transpired that Brader thought Dunlea was one Brian Kelly, the chief features sub-editor. Once she had got her Brians sorted out the hapless Kelly was sacked while Dunlea won a reprieve.

## RACING NEWS

**THE closure in May of the *Sporting Life* after 139 years of publication also brought to an end the Green Seal Service, a body managed by the paper which adjudicated in disputes between aggrieved punters and bookmakers.**

Green Seal had won the respect of many racegoers by proving that it wasn't in hock to the bookies, often finding in favour of the punter. But can one say the same of its replacement, the Independent Betting Arbitration Service (IBAS), which was belatedly launched this month?

IBAS is run by the Mirror Group aided by Satellite Information Services, in which the bookmakers have a big financial interest. And, rather mysteriously, it has refused to disclose the names of the impartial arbiters who will sit in judgment.

Another cause for concern is that the death of *Sporting Life* left the Mirror Group-owned *Racing Post* as the only surviving racing daily. Advertising heavily in the *Post*, and therefore contributing to Mirror profits, are the bookmakers.

Suspicions of a conflict of interest could have been avoided if a proposal by the British Horseracing Board for a genuinely independent body had not been thrown out – a decision which could leave the bookies laughing all the way to the bank.

## SCAMALOT

**WITH much publicity Camelot recently switched the thrust of its advertising from the naked appeal to self interest of "It Could Be You" to the heartwarming benefits the lottery brings to good causes. Just the sort of advertising, in fact, ministers assured parliament would never happen.**

Lord Astor, one Tory minister involved in setting up the lottery, told the *Times* in December 1995: "Because as a result of concerns expressed on all sides in both Houses on the effect of the proposed lottery on charitable giving, the government agreed that the lottery should not be allowed to market itself as a way of making a charitable donation."

Then heritage secretary Peter Brooke added his own assurances in the Commons: "The lottery will be marketed as a lottery, not as a charitable enterprise."

The concerns of the public and charities were well-founded: charitable donations have been carefully tracked by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations since October 1994, a month before the launch of the national lottery. Latest figures show that between 1993 and 1997 the percentage of people donating to charities shrank from 81 to 65 percent. More interesting still is the NCVO projection that if charitable giving had stayed at 1993 levels it would have stood at £5.9bn in 1997. Instead it was £4.5bn. The difference of £1.4bn is not far short of the £1.7 bn the national lottery earned in 1997.

Much of the drop in charitable donations is probably down to "freeriding" as the NCVO calls it — "the mistaken assumption that the lottery funded a larger range of voluntary action than it actually did". Undoubtedly a major contribution to this "mistaken assumption" is the national lottery show, a whole section of which, twice weekly, is devoted to detailing the mountain of wealth lottery ticket buyers have now donated to good causes.

Any extra sales this generates are, of course, a bonus to Camelot. Its own advertising code of practice prevents it from suggesting "that the funding made available to good causes from the national lottery is a substitute for direct donations to these causes". How nice of the BBC to do the job for Camelot.

*"It's in case someone steals the duvet"*

## JUST FANCY THAT!

**ON 22 November John Reid, transport minister, promised "quick results" and "plain speaking" when he and his secretary of state John Prescott met railway company chiefs on 26 November. "Reliability and overall quality has deteriorated and that isn't something we are going to tolerate because the passengers deserve better," he said. Everyone agrees that by far the worst company for unreliability and lack of overall quality is Virgin Trains (prop: Richard Branson, balloonist).**

On the same day the government announced that, as promised in its manifesto, the contract for the national lottery would be put out to tender when the present seven-year contract, awarded to Camelot, runs out. With the help of government spin doctors, most papers predicted that Camelot would not get the contract, which was likely to go to a buccaneering entrepreneur much adored by "new" Labour control freaks, who had promised that he would run the lottery without profits (rather like so many of his other businesses). His name? Richard Branson, balloonist.

# HACKWATCH

Garry Bushell

**THOUGH too young to have fought in a world war, Garry Bushell of the *Sun* feels an instinctive kinship with those who did: he is, after all, something of an Old Contemptible himself, and never afraid of going over the top.**

Hence his tear-jerking contribution on Armistice Day this year: "Pride. Dignity. Sacrifice. Remembrance Sunday still recalls another, greater Britain where patriotism stood for something more than pop industry marketing. And duty mattered more than self-gratification."

Lest we forget, here are a few samples of Garry's own devotion to duty.

**16 September:** "Never has there been a bigger need for entertainers on TV," Garry laments. But help is at hand: "Telly bosses are cordially invited to my New Variety shows at London's Green Room starting this Saturday."

**19 September:** Interviewed by Garry, Jim Davidson reveals that his musical tastes run to Pink Floyd "and some of the early punk bands, the Stranglers, the Gonads, good stuff like that". By an amazing coincidence, the leader of the Gonads is one G. Bushell. **23 September:** Garry is fed up with the same old faces dominating TV schedules. "Yes, we love David Jason, Pauline Quirke, John Thaw, Sam Janus etc, but why not give someone else a break?" Someone, perhaps, such as G. Bushell, whose Big Big Variety Show "took London's Green Room by storm" last week. But will television bosses listen? "It's easier to get on telly today if you are a bed-wetting pyromaniac than an entertainer," he grumbles. "And that can't be right."

**30 September:** "TV bosses and record companies checked out my West End New Variety shows," Garry reveals proudly. "So how about putting 'em on TV, chaps?"

**14 October:** A charming photograph of Bushell groping topless TV beauty Rebecca Lisi. "You've got to hand it to her," Garry quips as he "gets to grips with Rebecca's handiwork".

**17 October:** Garry interviews Melinda Messenger, and after a few remarks about knockers and big swells he gets down to serious business: "Melinda isn't doing topless shots any more but she does do her version of the *Full Monty* in my *Bushell's Blue Xmas* video — available in the *Sun* next month."

**21 October:** "There's so much sex on TV these days it is just as well my set is wall-hung," Garry chortles, helpfully appending a list of telly babes he'd like to see naked. And then down to business again: "Deep Purple were the biz on *Big Breakfast*. Let's have more morning rock! My Gonads are available."

**28 October:** A charming photograph of Bushell measuring the bust of topless TV beauty Katie-Ann Day, runner-up to Angelique in his Best Boobs on the Box poll. Garry explains that Katie-Ann "wants YOU to decide if a boob job would make her number one. Could she replace Angelique in your affections? They are pretty big cups to fill. Vote by post. It's all in your hands. If only." Phwooar!

**29 October:** "It is the funniest adult video for years, but I would say that wouldn't I?" Yup, *Bushell's Blue Xmas* is at last available for a bargain £11. It features the "hottest telly babes" (Katie-Ann Day) plus Bushell's favourite off-colour comedians — including such stars as Micky Pugh, Al Benson, Willie Thompson and Mad Mark Peters "whose act is as filthy as Jack Sugden's workboots". To whet our appetite, he prints a sample rib-tickler: "When they buried Freddie Mercury they needed a new service — Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, if you'd stuck to crumpet you'd still be with us." Very festive.

**4 November:** Garry was in stitches at the "host of great one-liners" from Northern comic Johnnie Casson on the *Des O'Connor Show*. For instance: "My wife budgets well. We do without a lot of things *I* don't need." Why, Garry demands, don't TV bosses give us side-splitting gagsters like this more often? As it is, "you have to go out for a good laugh — or stay in with a copy of *Bushell's Blue Xmas* video, dubbed "hilariously filthy, perfect for Christmas" by Barbara Windsor... Fill in the coupon below for your copy."

**11 November:** Hot news: Bushell's blue video is a "comedy masterpiece" according to Freddie Starr. Luckily, copies are still available.

**18 November:** Questions, questions. Why don't Richard and Judy "book my band, the Gonads"? Why have TV bosses still not commissioned a programme featuring the "fresh, popular and affordable" talent displayed in *Bushell's Big Variety Show* at the Green Room? Oh, and should telly babe Katie-Ann Day have cosmetic surgery to enhance her assets? "YES! You voted in your hundreds. On Monday I showed Katie my big poll and she was delighted. The swing was spectacular..." Talking of which, Garry was disappointed by Geri Halliwell's performance in the TV tribute to Prince Charles: "How can a girl with such a magnificent chest sing so flat?"

Pride. Dignity. Sacrifice. Bushell's prose recalls a time when these mattered more than marketing and self-gratification. At the going down of the *Sun*, we will remember them...

## GAY NEWS

**PETER TATCHELL's gay rights group OutRage! was quick to issue a press release condemning the outing of agriculture minister Nick Brown by the *News of the World*.**

"There is no public interest justification for Nick Brown being pressured to disclose his sexuality," wrote fanatical activist Tatchell. "He is not a hypocrite or a homophobe. His public pronouncements on gay issues are consistent with his private behaviour."

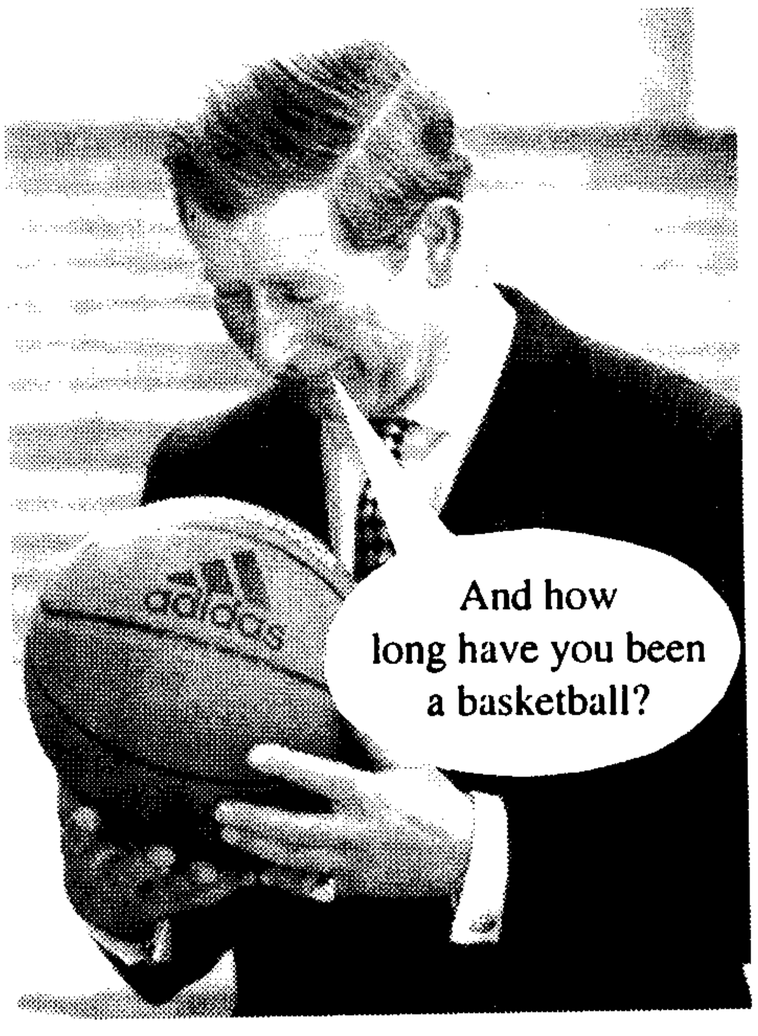
All this applied equally to that other celebrated outee Peter Mandelson, whose "undignified exposure" Tatchell also deplored. But could this be the same Peter Mandelson about whom Peter Tatchell wrote an article for an obscure magazine called *Punch* last year, detailing the then minister without portfolio's homosexuality and "shameful" refusal to admit to it? Surely not.

Tatchell, in fact, has been feeling increasingly redundant since the public outing of his known targets in the cabinet. He cannot even seek solace in his "gay sex at 14" campaign, since it was cruelly taken from him by his fellow OutRage! members, as reported in *Eye* 963.

To keep the self-promotion going in a dull period before his trial for "indecent behaviour in a church" comes up next week (not as exciting as it sounds: he grabbed the microphone during the Archbishop of Canterbury's Easter sermon as part of an OutRage protest about the age of consent), Tatchell gate-crashed a cast of C-list celebs in New York at the launch of a new ad campaign by the US animal rights group Peta against animal experiments in Aids research.

The bunny-huggers became confused when Tatchell took to the stage and denounced nearly all current Aids research as "scientifically flawed". Their confusion turned to utter bewilderment when he interrupted his rant to pay a long-winded tribute to the late River Phoenix's thespian brother Joaquim — "one of Hollywood's sexiest stars".

## SHOULD HE BE KING? Part 94



**AS the government's plans for closed list elections to the European parliament next June shuttlecocked from the Commons to the Lords and back five times, desperate attempts were made by both sides to persuade the general public that Tony Blair was the champion of democracy, fighting the blocking tactics of the hereditary peers — or that William Hague was the champion of democracy, defending the right of the public to elect candidates in their own right, not from party lists.**

Neither claim stands up to a moment's close examination.

In adopting the closed list system the government picked the most unpopular method of proportional representation. It did so to keep Captain Pantsdown and his increasingly mutinous brigade sweet. Paddy Ashdown needed to be rewarded for his loyalty, even if his hoped for early referendum on electoral reform has been booted into the long grass by the uncouth Jack Straw. But the closed list system does at least have the advantage of putting Labour's apparatchiks in charge with the added bonus of allowing them to clear out remaining "old" Labourites from the party's Strasbourg contingent.

Yet the deathly silence from the Labour benches as the Dear Leader battled with a strangely energised William Hague was no accident, since most Labour MPs were secretly banking on the Lords destroying the hated new system.

Those with a vested interest in seeing through the battle with the Lords, if only to watch scores of Labour MEPs fall victim to the closed list, include the deputy prime minister John Prescott and longtime Pantsdown hater Jack Straw. They — and others — in the cabinet hope that the likely Euro election debacle will cool any lingering ardour for reform of the electoral system as urged by Woy Jenkins.

Meanwhile Tory leader Hague is unabashed at the dragooning of countless hereditary peers to shoot down the government's proposals. When Hague was a valued member of the last cabinet, he supported the imposition of closed lists for elections to the new Northern Ireland assembly; nor did his depleted ranks rise on principle as the Labour government pushed through closed lists for Scotland. The Conservatives are officially committed to retaining first-past-the-post for elections, but this has not stopped them demanding in the Lords that the government should drop its support for closed lists and adopt, er, the even more daft open list system instead.

The only genuine supporter of the government's hated legislation is Captain Pantsdown, whose party stands to gain the most from these new arrangements. Which is why Labour and the Tories hate him more than they hate each other — and why hundreds of MPs and MEPs from both parties already have champagne cooling in their fridges for when the government announces "reluctantly" that the closed lists have been closed down.

**BACKBENCH "new" Labour comic Fraser Kemp is learning what it's like when jokes — or jokers — fall flat on their face.**

Believing his reputation as Tony's trusted lieutenant needed a little polishing, Kemp volunteered to write a dismally grovelling article demanding that all Labour MPs should in future face Stalinesque reselection panels. This would have the advantage, he wrote, of throwing out those who had acted as "persistent critics".

With Downing Street's approval Kemp first offered his efforts to the *Observer*. But the prose was so poor it was turned down. It was then offered to the *Guardian*, but only finally saw the light of day in the shape of a report in the same paper and on the front page of the *Independent*. Kemp's colleagues were so appalled they promptly voted for fiercely independent MP Andrew Mackinlay to represent them on the PLP liaison committee, which meets regularly with the prime minister.

Mackinlay's victory was ensured when he included a copy of the Kemp plans in his election address.

**AGRICULTURE minister Nick Brown has stepped smartly into a mighty row which is blowing apart the Labour party in the city he represents in parliament, Newcastle-on-Tyne.**

He has formally complained to the Law Society about two prominent Labour colleagues in the city, Sir Jeremy Beecham and Stefan Cross. The complaint follows the convictions of two child abusers who worked for a nursery in the city.

While Sir Jeremy was leader of the council during the abuse scandal, his solicitors' firm represented one of the abusers. The other was represented by Thompsons, of which Stefan Cross was a member while he was deputy chairman of the social services committee.

Brown is worried about possible conflicts of interest and thinks the whole matter should be investigated by the Law Society. His complaints have nothing whatever to do with the fact that both Beecham and Cross have always bitterly opposed the huge shopping development proposed by Newcastle United boss Frederick Shepherd (see last *Eye*). The development is in Brown's constituency and is passionately supported by the MP.

PS: The *Eye* has had a lot of complaints from MPs about the widely-circulated view that the Labour whips' office under Nick Brown was uncharacteristically benevolent to backbenchers. On the contrary, they say, they believe they were kept under very close surveillance by Brown and by his deputy, John Owen-Jones, who has also moved on (in his case to the Welsh office). The new regime under Ann Taylor is reported to be much more tolerant.

**FABIAN HAMILTON, the MP whose dubious business practices were deemed less damaging to Labour than the overt socialism of Liz Davies, has run into trouble on the roads of his Leeds North East constituency recently.**

Caught on speed cameras travelling at 58mph in a 40mph zone and fined £100, Hamilton pleaded the Blair amendment: the right to blame everyone but yourself for the trouble you find yourself in. The MP fired off an angry letter to the local council demanding to know why he was not notified of the "entirely unexpected" speed limit, which he claimed had been changed "overnight".

In an impressively droll response a council spokesman told the local paper that "speed signs were usually considered sufficient in themselves to not require additional ones".

● *Rotten Boroughs, Page 13*

## LORD ARCHER RHYMING SLANG (cont)

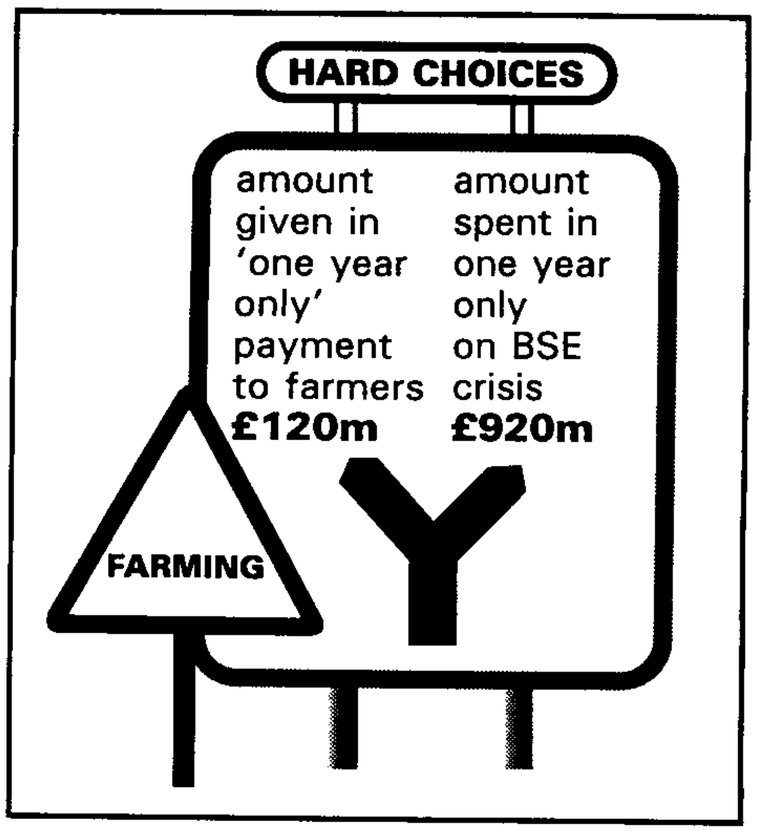
**A MEETING has been called for 1 December of the Britain/Bahrain all-party parliamentary group (joint chairmen: David Wilshire, Tory, and John Marek, Labour; secretary, Ken Purchase, Labour).**

The meeting coincides with the visit to Britain of Dr Ali Muttar, of the island's influential Shura council. A curious note to the meeting states: "Hon Admin: Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies".

Can this possibly be the same Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies which paid William Powell, the former Tory MP for Corby, regular monthly amounts which he did not declare, and whose ubiquitous director Omar Al Hassan was thrown out of the House of Commons by Emma Nicholson?

Has Mr Al Hassan managed to get another pass to replace the one he got from Powell? Perhaps the Commons staff should investigate — especially as a former senior clerk has described Mr Al Hassan as "a crook".

PS: There is no elected parliament (or opposition political parties, for that matter) in Bahrain.


HARD CHOICES
amount given in 'one year only' payment to farmers £120m
amount spent in one year only on BSE crisis £920m
FARMING

**UNKIND Labour MPs can increasingly be overheard in the tearoom contrasting and comparing the German chancellor's deputy — the "Saarland Napoleon", Oskar Lafontaine — with their own John "Mouth of the Humber" Prescott. And they are finding the latter wanting.**

In recent days Prescott has been doubly humbled. He was in Japan and deliberately not consulted when Blair launched his latest initiative with Paddy Ashdown, bringing the two parties closer together; and there was precious little mention of Prescott's brave plans for transport in the queen's speech.

**THE love affair between "new" Labour and British Airways continues with BA chief Bob Ayling now being mooted as a possible mayor of London and even ordinary Labour backbenchers benefiting from the airline's largesse.**

The *Eye* is pleased to announce the winners of the BA draw at the Labour party conference. They were Ivor Caplin (Hove), who won two return tickets to New York on Concorde. Second prize was claimed by Andrew Miller (Ellesmere Port), who got two return tickets to Prague. Janet Anderson (Rossendale) came third with two club class returns to Paris.

Such is the generosity of Ayling's airline that some Labour MPs won tickets without even entering the draw. Reading MP Jane Griffiths flew to Armenia in January courtesy of BA, although this was a fact-finding tour.

No such excuse for Brian Donohoe (Cunninghame South), who was flown to see the Scotland-Brazil match of the world cup by BA (which also paid for the hotel and the match ticket). Mind you, Donohoe does claim transport as one of his main political interests. So that's all right, then.

**CHARLIE WHELAN, Gordon Brown's roly-poly spindoctor, is to be interrogated by a House of Lords select committee about his briefings for hacks on the single currency.**

According to the *Sunday Times*, Labour peer Lord Peston "may be asked to chair the sessions". And one subject certain to come up is the famous front page story published by the *Financial Times* on 26 September 1997 which caused turmoil on the stock exchange by alleging that the government was moving closer to economic and monetary union.

Lord Peston will want to know if this leak was authorised by Whelan and his boss. But it might be simpler to ask the *FT* political correspondent who wrote the piece — Robert Peston, aka his lordship's son.

More recently in the Commons, meanwhile, a group of journalists and party hacks were dining quietly in the press gallery when they were joined by a noisy Whelan. Clearly tired and emotional after a long day of political intrigue, he began to criticise another *Financial Times* journalist — economics editor Robert Chote.

"Chote's a c**t. I hate Chote," Whelan announced to his shocked fellow diners. "Chote's a loony, everyone knows that. We've isolated Chote as a loony haven't we?" he demanded.

The *Eye* advises Chote, who refuses to suck up to "new" Labour, not to take loony Whelan's comments to heart.

**TRY asking yourself the simple question: "Who is home secretary Jack Straw's shadow?" It takes a while, doesn't it?**

In fact the collective amnesia extends as far as the Tory central office switchboard where callers asking to be put through to the shadow home secretary are met with a cheerful "...now who's that, dear... I like to think it's Michael Howard but he's *foreign* now, isn't he?"

Ironically the free run given to Straw by his invisible shadow may work to the Tories' advantage in the end. The home secretary has established himself as by far the most successful member of the cabinet in its first 18 months in office. And with his opposition to Lib-Labbery, Straw is building a solid political base. He's now in a position to really cause a rumpus. People are already thinking about what his next job should be. The problem is... we already have a chancellor of the exchequer.

**WHEN John Major became prime minister the ministry of defence promptly moved a large part of its Procurement Executive to RAF Wyton – which just happened to be in the constituency of a certain J. Major.**

Now that the Tartan mafia is running the government and wanting to curry favour with the Scottish masses, guess what? Civil servants at RAF Wyton are about to be made redundant as their jobs move to... Glasgow.

This will cost the taxpayer a bob or two, of course, but it would be absurd to suggest that it is tantamount to buying Scottish votes. As everyone knows, vote-buying is illegal only when Shirley Porter does it.

*'Backbiter'*

## ARMS AND THE GENERAL

**WHILE General Pinochet was convalescing at a north London clinic awaiting the law lords' ruling on his extradition to Spain to face murder charges, back in Chile work continued on the joint Anglo-Chilean missile project that was the main reason for the old monster's visit in the first place.**

Far from coming to London every autumn to potter around Fortnum's and take tea with Baroness Thatch of Santiago, Pinochet's annual visits, as Chile's arms-buyer-in-chief, have been to discuss the progress of Project Rayo, a multiple rocket system being developed by FAMAE of Chile and Britain's privatised Royal Ordnance, now a division of British Aerospace.

Rayo ("Lightning") is designed in the UK and manufactured in Chile. In the words of one source close to the project: "It's a poor man's artillery rocket system tailored for sale to third world countries." The project is nearing completion and firing trials have been underway in Chile this year.

According to *Jane's*: "Although the first customer for Rayo will be the Chilean army, there is already considerable interest in the system and a number of undisclosed potential customers have requested detailed briefings on Rayo." Who might these secretive potential buyers be?

Well, as might be imagined, General Pinochet, being both a mass murderer *and* a champion of the free market, has never been fussy about who Chile does business with. The country's arms dealers have done plenty of trade in the past with various Middle Eastern countries, including Iraq.

An intriguing specification of Rayo insisted upon by the Chileans is that it has detachable warheads. The standard versions deliver high explosive to the ground, or explode in the air to deliver a shower of "bomblets". An advantage of detachable warheads, of course, is that they can be easily removed by the end-user and replaced — with chemical or biological warheads, for instance.

## LEGAL NEWS

**DESPITE having practised as a solicitor since 1937, Peter Carter-Fuck still hasn't mastered the elementary rules governing conflicts of interest.**

One of the cardinal rules is that a lawyer cannot represent rival parties to a dispute. And yet this is precisely what Carter-Fuck did when he and his partner Andrew Stephenson agreed to act for Arden Guy McClelland in a libel action against *Private Eye*.

McClelland's company, Maccorp, ran a chain of bureaux de change which had been pursued through the courts for several years by its better known competitor, Chequepoint. And Chequepoint's solicitors included none other than Peter Carter-Fuck and Andrew Stephenson.

Not surprisingly Chequepoint bosses were rather peeved to find that the veteran writ-server was now working for the opposition. They complained to the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, whose compliance and supervision committee has now issued the following judgment:

"The committee FOUND that there had been a breach of Principles 9.01 and 9.03 of the 1986 Guide to the Professional Conduct of Solicitors and that the firm had acted in a conflict of interest situation by accepting instructions to act for Chequepoint and Maccorp and Mr McClelland. The committee therefore RESOLVED to reprimand Mr P. F. Carter-Fuck and severely to reprimand Mr A. J. Stephenson for that breach."

Peter Carter-Fuck is 84.

**"We hope we can reincarnate some of the workers out of this fatal mistake."**

*Stourbridge Chronicle*

## NOOKS and CORNERS

**ACCIDENTS will happen and sometimes they *really are* accidents – even in Glasgow where buildings "go on fire" rather than being "set on fire". Last month Virginia Galleries, a remarkable listed building, had to be closed and evacuated following subsidence caused by excavation work nextdoor by Messrs Tarmac on behalf of Marks & Spencer.**

Parts of the Regency structure have slipped by as much as ten inches. Thirty-nine small businesses have had to close and the future of the building is uncertain. But surely it will be saved? After all, Historic Scotland describes it and its neighbours in Virginia Street as "of national importance".

Virginia Galleries, also known as Crown Arcade, aka the Sugar Exchange, aka the Tobacco Exchange in the old Merchant City part of Glasgow, was built in about 1819 as tobacco auction rooms. Three-storeyed with internal galleries around a courtyard, it was modelled on the smart arcades of Paris. Gomme & Walker's classic *Architecture of Glasgow* described it as "the most valuable survivor of all... most precious... the only remaining example of the exchange which at one time must have been among the most important public buildings of the city".

Surely such a beautiful and practical building would be cherished and become a vital focus of urban regeneration? In any other city in Britain, yes. But not in Glasgow. Before its recent disaster the Tobacco Exchange had been spoiled and was seedy and rundown, although used to advantage by small businesses like craft and bookshops. So why didn't Glasgow — City of Culture in 1990 and City of Architecture and Design in 1999 — do something?

To be fair, it tried. In 1989 an £8m development plan for this part of the Merchant City was announced and over the next two years £1.28m was spent by the Scottish development agency (SDA) on the Tobacco Exchange and the other contemporary listed buildings on the west side of Virginia Street. Yet today most of these buildings are in worse condition than a decade ago, although "lead developer" Mr Barry Clapham claims "they have been completely restored or totally maintained".

In fact only one building has been restored — one that Mr Clapham sold on. Meanwhile Virginia Court — elegant and severe stone buildings of c. 1817 next to the Exchange — is empty and rotting, while one side of the court has disappeared, accidentally hit by a bulldozer. Oh dear.

Mr Clapham is well known to the planning authorities and amenity societies in the city. He loves listed historic buildings and likes to own them. The 1989 restoration and development proposals were made by Credential Holdings, headed by Mr Clapham, and backed by the SDA. Unfortunately Credential Holdings no longer exists, but Mr Clapham has interests in lots of other companies including Virginia Court Developments Ltd, which — with Scottish Enterprise, a public body — now owns the poor old Tobacco Exchange. He also used to own Virginia Court but recently sold it to Peter McGurn, his architect back in 1989, apparently for just £1.

So why doesn't Glasgow's planning department (now called the Department of Physical and Economic Regeneration) act? It has the power of compulsory purchase, after all. In fact a proposal to CPO Virginia Court was withdrawn earlier this year after its new owner promised his new organisation would restore the buildings and convert the upper storeys into housing.

Public authorities are often afraid to use CPO powers without a commercial backer, but with the Tobacco Exchange there were two companies able and willing to take it on. One developer was even negotiating with the council to buy it, but somehow part-owner Mr Clapham got wind of the negotiations and scuppered them. No wonder the Glasgow *Herald* could describe a "smokescreen of intrigue and squabbles" impeding the rescue of these rare survivals from Georgian Glasgow.

Will the planners serve a repairs notice or go ahead with a CPO? The case is being handled by deputy planning director Don Bennett, who seems reluctant to take action to secure the future of the building. Meanwhile the Tobacco Exchange teeters on the verge of extinction.

At least building control officers have stopped excavations for M&S's extension, but the fear is they might condemn the damaged building. Following the disaster M&S offered an initial £2,000 compensation to each of the displaced tenants. It invited them to approach M&S directly rather than pay them via Mr Clapham. Why go to the trouble of doing that? And, talking of money, what happened to the £1.28m spent in Virginia Street a decade ago?

*'Piloti'*

## SCHOOL RULES

**NOW that home secretary Jack Straw has finally vacated the chair of governors at Pimlico School, his erstwhile colleagues keep discovering items of unfinished business.**

Several "outstanding issues" have been left hanging by July's fateful decision to demolish and rebuild the school with money from the private finance initiative, as proposed by Westminster city council and enthusiastically championed by Straw. How, for example, can asbestos be removed while children are still around? When pupils went on strike in protest recently, Straw's boys in blue had to be called to restore order. But plenty more disturbances can be expected if the project goes ahead.

There has been further outrage at the council's belated admission that most of the £32m of "private finance" will in fact come from the taxpayer via a £25m revenue support grant.

Two weeks ago, at their first meeting since Straw's departure, governors were informed that July's decision to demolish may have been "procedurally incorrect" since it directly contradicted a resolution passed the previous year. Governors are now seeking legal advice — but not from barrister Straw.

# TV

## Bob And Margaret (Channel 4)

**THIS column frequently warns against the horrors of copycat programming, but even worse is dead-copycat programming in which the big idea of two years back suddenly turns up in quadruplicate at the exact time that viewers are tiring of the genre. So it is currently with costume dramas (Vanity Fair), docusoaps (War and Piste — about skiing, would you believe?) and now, rather less expectedly, adult cartoon series.**

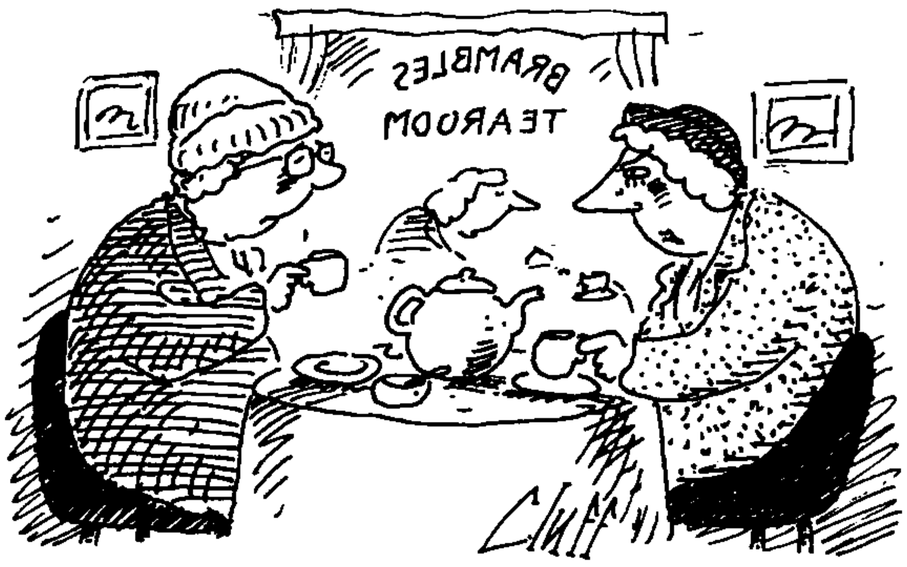
*The Simpsons* — the American cartoon folks who first demonstrated that mainstream animation did not have to mean cute Disney animals at one end of the scale or Bob Godfrey's X-rated *Fritz The Cat* at the other — have been blamed by rightwing commentators for glamorising the dysfunctional family. Whether or not this is true, they are certainly guilty of glamorising the dysfunctional family cartoon.

Everywhere you look these days there are round-headed, pink-faced types with their funny little triangular or round mouths fluttering away frame by frame in unnaturally high voices as they utter mildly off-colour remarks in an attempt to suggest that they are the illegitimate animated offspring of Homer Simpson.

The American series *South Park* has recently been screened on Channel 4, with its violent schoolkids (catchphrase: "They just killed Kenny") and Isaac Hayes as a school chef prone to singing sexually explicit songs. Another set of Simpson bastards are to be found in the series *King Of The Hill*.

And now, Gold help us, we are getting the English cousins. This country's first Simpsons-style cartoon series *Stressed Eric* was premiered in the summer on BBC2. The hero was an overworked executive separated from his wife. Everything went wrong for Eric. Sex with his nubile new girlfriend was always being interrupted. Vital papers for his work were always being thrown away by the cleaner or caught by a gust of wind on the street. One critic called it "existential", which is always a bad sign.

Now Channel 4 offers **Bob And Margaret**, another late-night adult cartoon series. In an intriguing illustration of national comic stereotypes, the families in the American shows have tended, from *The Simpsons* onwards, to be smart and potentially dangerous, whereas the line-drawn heroes in the British ones are invariably floppy and downtrodden.




*"Try and be a bit more amusing, Agnes — what if Alan Bennett's eavesdropping?"*

In *Bob And Margaret* the husband is another round-headed, bird-mouthed wimp with a cosy but rather slow wife. Bob, like Stressed Eric whom he almost exactly resembles, is under such pressure at work that pleasures are impossible. Desperate to watch the video he has rented, he sits up late to see it but falls asleep on the sofa. Bob and Margaret are thinking of starting a family but a visit to friends who have just spawned rapidly disillusions them.

The problem is, though, that the viewer is asked to make so many allowances for the difficulty of what is being attempted — endless newspaper articles explain the millions of hours of work it takes to make a cartoon character wave — that it seems churlish to compare the efforts with those produced under no such limitations.

If *Bob And Margaret* were a sitcom with human performers, it would never have reached the screen. The dialogue, emerging from a face of skin rather than paper, would seem impossibly antique. Take Margaret's wry remark as Bob wonders where they stand on the reproduction issue after the visit to their breeder friends. "Let's wait another 17 years!" she mutters. Even in *Terry and June* in the seventies the script editor might have excised that one. So why should it be acceptable merely because the line has required 27 junior animators to get the mouth movements right?

The same objection applies to the so-called adult content. A nappy is changed in front of Bob and Margaret and we see a little bit of shit. This is supposed to be shocking and daring because Disney has conditioned us not to expect to see pooh in a cartoon. But, again, it is a moment asking for special allowances. Tawdry and boring by ordinary television standards, it asks credit for resisting the limitations of animation.

The linguistic invention and comic set-pieces of *The Simpsons* would still be impressive if made flesh. But, as with *Stressed Eric* before it, almost nothing about *Bob And Margaret* is good television. It is all not-bad-for-cartoon, which is very different.

*'Square Eyes'*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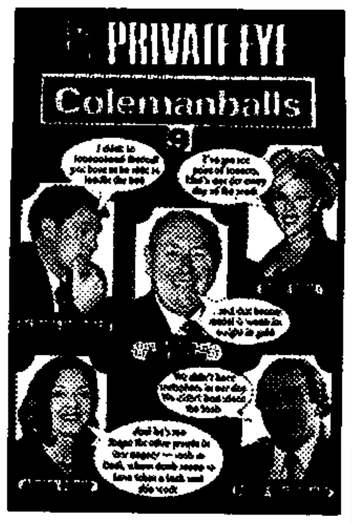


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## MEDIA NEWS

**BSKYB is using a novel marketing technique to win new subscribers: the "mailshot with menaces".**

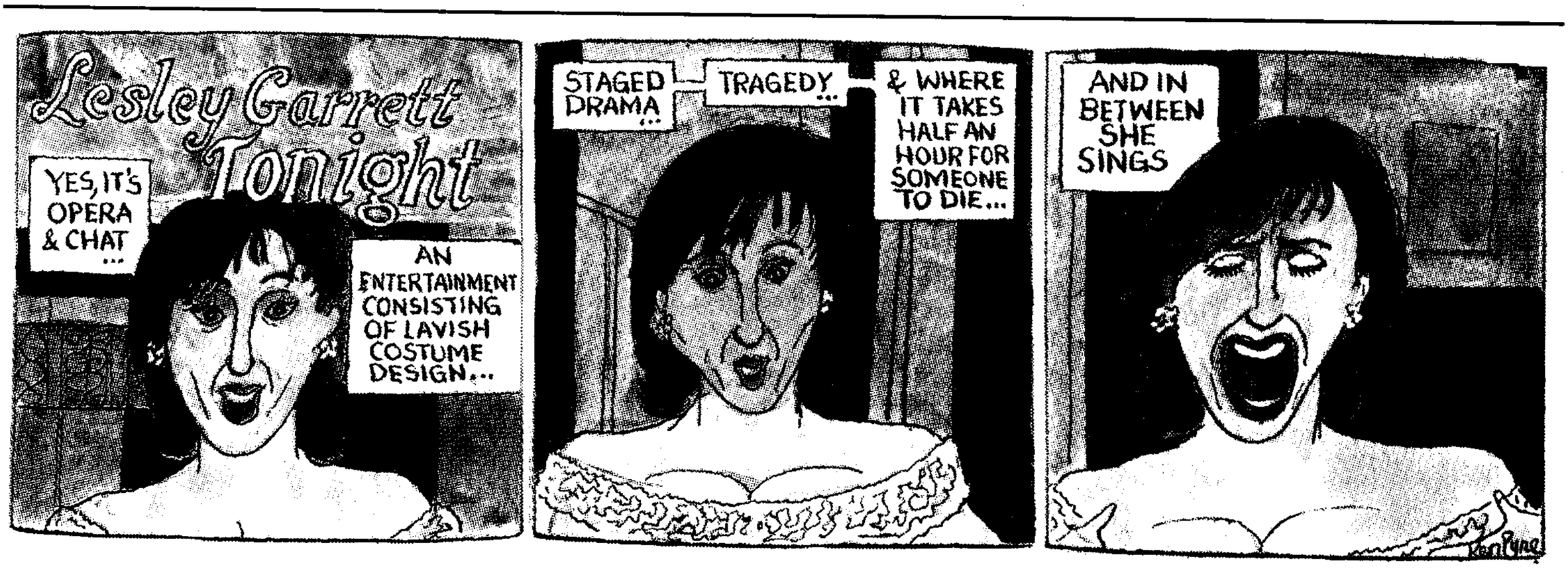
Julian Peterson, of The Watershed nightclub in Wimbledon, was puzzled to receive a letter from Mark Carberry at Sky's "subscriber management centre" in West Lothian, which began: "It has come to our attention that you have previously shown televised football matches at your premises."

Mr Peterson was mystified as there is no TV at his club, nor is he a personal Sky subscriber. His puzzlement turned to anger when Mr Carberry went on to accuse him of infringing BSkyB's copyright and of dishonesty in receiving its programmes while trying to avoid paying for a subscription. "This is a criminal offence which is punishable upon conviction by a fine of up to £5,000..."

The letter enclosed a subscription agreement and concluded by saying "one of our representatives will be in your area shortly and will visit..."

A furious Mr Peterson assumed a malicious prankster had "tipped off" Sky. But no. When he telephoned to put the record straight Sky admitted that *12,000* such letters had been sent to owners of licensed premises on the assumption *some* of them must be illegally hooking up to Sky Sports.

As Mr Peterson told the *Eye*. "We have our reputation to consider. If people thought we showed Sky TV it could harm our business."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AN ENTERTAINMENT CONSISTING OF LAVISH COSTUME DESIGN...
STAGED DRAMA ...
TRAGEDY ...
& WHERE IT TAKES HALF AN HOUR FOR SOMEONE TO DIE...
AND IN BETWEEN SHE SINGS
Ken Pyne

# JUST FANCY THAT!

"James is so far up John's arse that he can see Matthew's heels."
*— BBC executive overheard in a corridor at Radio 4 referring to Messrs Boyle, Birt and Bannister.*

**IN the end, though, blind loyalty was not enough to secure the expected promotion of James Boyle, controller of Radio Four, to Matthew Bannister's vacant post as director of radio.**

Birt *had* given Boyle the nod, quietly appointing him "acting director" shortly after the worst ever audience figures for R4 were announced; but fearing a wave of public nausea following the elevation of the man responsible for them, he decided to give the job to Jenny Abramsky instead. Abramsky, of course, can never stand accused of losing an audience: as director of continuous news she never had one to start with.

All this gives the wretched Boyle time to reflect on his poor performance and direct responsibility for the disaster away from himself. Having already blamed "unpredictable" listeners and "shoddy" producers, he's now pointing the finger at the research study he relied on when tampering with the schedule.

The latest theory is that R4 never really had the audiences it claimed before Boyle's new schedule was introduced. Before he made programmes run in strict multiples of 15 minutes, many programmes straddled junctions on the hour, the half and the quarter. This meant that if you listened to a programme that ended at, say, 7.02, you were counted twice. Not Boyle's fault after all, guv.

**THE decision to sack Isabel Hilton, talented and knowledgeable presenter of *The World Tonight*, marks a new management style at the BBC.**

Hilton was very popular with audiences and came out of the endless market research studies well. She was sacked anyway — the first time BBC managers have ignored the advice of a focus group.

## Plugged In

**MOVING NEWS**

*News At Ten* is no sacred cow.

The campaign to keep it at ten o'clock was ludicrous.

If people want news at ten there is Sky, CNN, CNBC and BBC News 24.

**The Sun**

*An occasional column devoted to cross-media plugs masquerading as news.*

**ASIAN media tycoon Avtar Lit, owner of Sunrise Radio, has been arrested following an investigation by Inspector Knacker into allegations of corruption.**

The Radio Authority's deputy head of programming and advertising, Janet Lee, was also arrested and both have been bailed to reappear in January. The arrests followed a trip by Lee to Rajasthan in India with a director of Sunrise Radio. Although the press has found these manoeuvres exciting, Asian media watchers are only amazed that Mr Lit hasn't run into trouble sooner.

He caused controversy in 1995 when Sunrise Radio, the self-styled "nation's favourite Asian station", ran a charity appeal for an organisation called Worldwide Muslim Aid to coincide with the holy month of Ramadan. It later emerged that Worldwide Muslim Aid had not been registered as a charity with the charities commission and no set of public accounts was published once the appeal was over. The Radio Authority fined Avtar Lit a nominal £1,000 for breaching its advertising code.

These days Lit is much more respectable and was planning to bid for an FM licence before his recent setback. His attempt to secure the licence was supported by Thames Valley University's vice chancellor Mike Fitzgerald, who awarded Lit an honorary doctorate. Last week Dr Fitzgerald resigned from his post after an official report condemned low standards at the university.

**STUNG by criticism that it plays *Pravda* to John Birt's Politburo, the BBC's in-house magazine *Ariel* was handed over to the people for one issue last week.**

Renamed *Scariel* in tribute to the "climate of fear" that Mark Tully denounced in the corporation, the special edition was dedicated to "the 32 staff who have just been made redundant in Resources — and many, many more before them — as the BBC tries to make itself `more competitive'."

Inside were the results of a staff survey which identified areas of major concern as "manipulative and brutal management tactics; a craven following of consultants and accountants; an obsession with management over creativity; thinking of people purely as numbers and losing sight of the difference between commercial and public service broadcasting". Not to mention the "desire to ingratiate at any cost with any British government, even at the expense of radio network standards, or the international standing of the World Service".

*"I like it! I like it!"*

**RECENT changes at BBC Television in White City have left many perplexed, what with edit suites now such a distance from transmission suites that producers with last-minute tapes have been issued with orders not to run — and signs have gone up warning of "people walking quickly". But few have been quite so perplexed as the Beeb's razor-sharp economics guru Sir Peter Jaybotham.**

Jay was spotted in a corridor recently, gesticulating at a door marked Occupational Health: he claimed that it was in fact his office and had somehow been moved without anyone telling him.

In fact Occupational Health was one of the few offices not to be moved in the recent upheaval.

Jay, who has recently been commissioned by the BBC to explain the economics of the 20th century to the masses, is rumoured to be still wandering the corridors of White City, trying to remember where his desk is.

**WHEN John Birt banned all discussion on the BBC of Peter Mandelson's sexual orientation, his fawning before an important government minister — and personal chum — did yet more harm to his shattered reputation as a tough "newsman".**

Birt, of course, was not always so craven. Indeed, as someone once wrote about the director-general: "He has a simple rule: If a programme has its facts right, defend it. If it has them wrong, own up... He's far from the `safe' Establishment-creep critics claim. On the contrary, he has put spine back into the BBC's news and current affairs by insisting that their reports always stand up."

And who penned this brown-nosing tribute to the D-G? Er, step forward one Peter Mandelson, who in the early 90s had a column in the then Maxwell-owned rag *The People*. Between friends, of course, one good turn deserves another.

**Cordelia Pyne, 27, has pledged support for a new political group, Tunbridge Wells Action Team, which is attempting to recruit younger people to Conservative party membership.**

**TWAT, which meets at the Hare pub on Fridays, is the frontline of a new national recruitment campaign organised by Asda boss and Tunbridge Wells MP Archie Norman.**

*Sevenoaks Chronicle*

**LORD "Alco" Hollick's media empire includes TV company Meridian, producers of a show aimed at teenagers, *The Mag*, for Channel 5, which tries to have its finger on the pulse of happening issues for the yoof of today by inviting guests to discuss such PC subjects as race, gays, drugs, etc, in front of a studio audience of trendy young things.**

Alas, a guest invited on to a recent edition picked up a script for the programme's intros and links which was intended for the presenters' eyes only. He was surprised to find it littered with abusive remarks about the guests — except, it seems, the white middle-class ones.

One Asian guest, for example, "wasn't all there" and the audience should be encouraged to laugh at him; presenters were urged to "talk over" a gay contributor to stop him "banging on" about prejudice. Not very new Labour, really.

**MEANWHILE, as a loyal Blairite, milord Hollick is mustard-keen on "rebranding", "focus groups" and other such tosh. Imagine his pride, then, when his magazine publishing group, Miller Freeman, unveiled its new logo at the end of October.**

A glossy pamphlet explained why "the heart of our new corporate identity system" was to be a picture of a fox: "It communicates a sense of fun and a company that is ingenious, determined and surprising. It's quite different from the identity we have at the moment and it's meant to be! 'Freeman the Fox' is a lively, engaging character – there's no limit to what Freeman can achieve."

Alas! The furry little chap caused consternation among staff — especially those in the highly profitable farming division, who pointed out that the farmer's worst enemy was hardly the most tactful choice of logo to inflict on their readers. Within a fortnight the chief executive of Miller Freeman Worldwide, Tony Tillin, was forced into an embarrassing U-turn. At vast expense everything carrying the new logo – writing paper, business cards, corporate brochures – has been scrapped.

# WORLD OF HYPE

**THE rich and mysterious Barclay brothers are upset with Lord "Flasher" Bell, their PR fixer and friend, it seems, over his lobbying work for the tax haven of Guernsey.**

The wannabe press barons, owners of the *European*, have an obsessional hatred of Guernsey. Owning the neighbouring Channel Island of Brechou, off Sark, they believe Guernsey to be full off skulduggery which should be exposed.

How embarrassing that their close chum Bell is vigorously promoting the "funny money" isle and protecting its political interests. The brothers, based in Monte Carlo, knew Bell worked for Guernsey but are now "concerned and disappointed" at the extent to which his company is helping the tax dodgers.

Bell and the Barclays have been intimate for many years. David Barclay was one of a tiny number of guests at Lord Flasher's wedding in 1988 and he was a major investor in the original Lowe Bell Communications. Now it looks as though it will end in tears.

# CURSE OF THE PHARAOH

**THE phoney pharaoh Mohamed Fayed is no longer content with shopkeeping and has decided to move into property development. Harrods is building a large development of luxury homes complete with tennis courts next to the Thames in Barnes. The exciting name chosen for this project? The Harrods Village.**

Glossy brochures are being sent to potential buyers with details of the development and local amenities the area can offer. Alas, Fayed's brochure has already managed to infuriate local teachers and parents.

The brochure states that most parents who live in Barnes choose not to send their children to local schools because they are languishing at the bottom of the league tables. But Fayed's legendary grasp of fact seems to have let him down. Barnes schools are performing perfectly well. For example, the respected Westfield primary has a good record of sending children on to the best private and state education schools in the area.

# DOING THE ROUNDS

**IF YOU were pregnant, would you let an obstetrician stick a needle into your uterus without knowing where the baby is? It happens every day in the UK.**

Amniocentesis involves drawing off fluid from around the baby in the womb to diagnose conditions such as Down's syndrome. It's usually performed at 16 weeks and parents are told the risk of causing miscarriage is between 0.5 percent and 1 percent. However, in some hands the risk may be much higher. An unpublished audit at a centre in Wales found a miscarriage rate of 4 percent — a staggering eight times worse than the best centres. Why?

A successful amniocentesis depends on the needle reaching the amniotic fluid in the womb without hitting the baby. For more than 15 years ultrasound equipment has allowed continuous monitoring so that the needle tip is always in view during the procedure, as are the placenta and the baby (which has a habit of moving round).

It requires training and considerable skill to operate the ultrasound equipment and guide the needle at the same time and, as you'd expect in a service as patchy as the NHS, some obstetricians (both junior and senior) don't have it. But they do amniocentesis anyway.

How? They do the ultrasound first, find out where the baby is, put the scanner down, pick up the needle and hope the baby doesn't move. But often it does. And even if you manage to avoid the baby, you may hit the placenta which can have equally catastrophic effects. Bad amniocentesis can not only cause miscarriage, but there's increasing evidence that it could lead to brain damage in surviving infants.

If amniocentesis is done blind, the only way of knowing you're in the right spot is if the syringe is filled with clear amniotic fluid. If it's filled with blood you've bodged up but you get rid of it quickly, hope the parents don't notice and have another go. This is clearly unacceptable practice, but it wasn't until 1996 that the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists got round to issuing guidelines, stating that amniocentesis *must* be performed under continuous ultrasound with the tip of the needle always in view.

Alas, royal colleges carry little clout and some obstetricians just carry on doing it the old way. Eric Jauniaux, a foetal medicine expert at University College hospital, sees one woman a week who has had a failed amniocentesis. "In most of the cases they tell me that there wasn't any ultrasound guidance at the time of the procedure."

As with most of medicine, training is poor and there's very little quality control of ultrasound use and amniocentesis in individual centres. So it's very difficult for women to find out whether or not the person performing the amniocentesis is adequately trained and competent.

In addition, many obstetricians won't acknowledge the huge variation in miscarriage rates or the brain damage that can result from botched amniocentesis. At present, the only way of ensuring it isn't done blind is for patients themselves to do quality checks on doctors. This is incredibly difficult. A woman who is already petrified she might have a baby with a congenital abnormality, lies on her back and faces an obstetrician with a needle. Is she going to ask if continuous ultrasound guidance is being used?

Most women are frightened of challenging doctors, as the horrific injuries inflicted by Kent gynaecologist Rodney Ledward will testify. He was dubbed "the Butcher" by colleagues at William Harvey hospital in Ashford. They had to repair his cock-ups and yet they didn't stop him operating. Likewise, the majority of competent obstetricians in this country who are doing amniocentesis properly are aware of those in their department who aren't. But will they stop them? No. As ever the self-regulation of doctors stinks.

● CANCER patients at St James' Hospital, Leeds, have been overwhelmed by the generosity of administrators. Normal TV sets have been removed from wards and replaced with an expensive pay-per-view operation run by a private company, Patientline. This restricts viewing to those with cash. One nurse, who took pity on bored patients spending weeks and months on a cancer ward, put out a couple of "free" portable TV sets. Hospital bosses rebuked the nurse and ordered the sets to be removed so as not to compromise the trust's relationship with Patientline.

*M.D.*

# DOWN ON THE FARM

**IT certainly was a triumph of spin that "Gay Wellies" Brown, the agriculture minister, was able to win himself 15 minutes of fame with headlines such as "Government Pays Out £120m To Save Britain's Farmers".**

The first thing farmers observed was that this "lifeline" (*Daily Telegraph*), which can still only be paid out if it is "approved" by our masters in Brussels, was a perfect redefinition of the old phrase "adding insult to injury".

For a start there was the size of the "package". £120m may sound like a lot to a tabloid headline writer. But compare it with the £4,000m the government and the EU have already thrown away on pointlessly incinerating three million perfectly healthy cattle and it looks like, well, chickenfeed. It even looks like peanuts against the £980m both this government and the last refused to call on under Brussels rules to make up for the effects of the strong pound because 70 percent of the bill would have had to be met by British taxpayers.

So what effect will the "Brown lifeline" have? No t a penny goes to the worst-hit sector of all, the pig men, even though scores are now closing down every week because under CAP rules they cannot be given subsidies. Most of Brown's £120m (actually yours and mine) will go to hill farmers and beef producers, half of it to those in Scotland and Wales.

Since these are men who have seen their average income fall to below £3,000 in the past two years, the additional £2,000 they are about to receive will scarcely tide them through Christmas when they have cattle to feed — and sheep to shoot and bury because they won't fetch the price of a packet of crisps at market.

Perhaps the most cynical part of Brown's package is the halving of the payment farmers get for slaughtering 800,000 baby calves a year as part of a Maffia "market stabilisation scheme". Now many farmers will still have to slaughter many of their calves as soon as they are born, because other government BSE-related measures have made them unsaleable; but instead of getting £40 a head they will now get only £20.

In short the Maffia and treasury officials have come up with nothing more than a PR gesture, banking on the gullibility of the media to win them headlines suggesting that they might have done something to delay the imminent collapse of British agriculture. Even the Nat West Bank is now predicting that 25,000 farmers will go bankrupt over the next year, with plenty more to follow.

Indeed there is now more than just a suspicion that this disaster is actually being welcomed both by the Maffia and Brussels, as providing a welcome boost to their longterm plan to cut back the operations of British agriculture by up to 50 percent. And certainly the farmers can't look to the dear old NFU for any support, since it is right in there planning the demise of many of its remaining members.

At a recent conference near Cambridge the audience was astonished to hear Ian Gardiner, the NFU's policy director, complaining "the problem is that there are too many farmers". If they expected him to raise some protest about their plight, he jocularly went on, "I am prepared to get my feet wet for farmers but not to drown for them". Those farmers in his audience already having to practise their breaststroke were not wholly ready to share his little joke. But on one thing they were agreed. Never in its history has the "No Effing Use" better lived up to its name.

*'Even Newer Muckspreader'*

# SIGNAL FAILURES

## Lying on the rails

**FINDING themselves with nothing to shout about from the rooftops, some rail businesses are shouting from the rooftops anyway — and keeping the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) very busy.**

For example, the ASA upheld a complaint against a Railtrack advert that claimed the privatised system had generated "the first substantial growth in rail travel in a generation". When it was pointed out that rail travel grew similarly in the late 1980s, Railtrack tried to argue that the gap from 1988 to 1998 could be defined as a generation. Given that pregnancy among 10 year olds is not yet the norm, the ASA ordered Railtrack not to repeat the daft claim.

Virgin Trains, meanwhile, has adopted the Stalinist maxim that anything is possible as long as you say it has happened. Striking posters in red and black tell people to rejoice at the improvements they are witnessing under the new regime and those to come under the 15 Year Plan. "We've started reducing the confusing number of ticket options," says one poster (see last *Eye*) — hoping the plebs won't realise how many *extra* tickets Virgin has introduced. Virgin has promised the ASA it will not repeat an advert in which it claimed, with no factual basis at all, to run more trains each weekday between Holyhead and London.

Things began to go awry in February 1997 a month before Virgin took over the west coast (London to Glasgow) franchise: "Virgin is committed to moving quickly to restore customer confidence in the service, by achieving 90 percent punctuality for most services within a year from take-over." After 18 months Virgin's 12-month average punctuality is still below 90 percent on *all* its routes, with only 74.4 percent of Anglo-Scottish expresses "on time" in the year to September 1998.

To excuse Virgin's spectacular failure to keep its promise, Richard Branson complained to the *Times* that "virtually no money was spent on track and rolling stock" on the west coast line by British Rail in its last 20 years. Oh dear. Between 1973/4 and 1993/4 BR invested nearly *half a billion pounds* on the route, at current prices, on items such as new locos and carriages in the 1980s, extra electrification in the 1990s, creating Milton Keynes station and rebuilding the tracks at Crewe. Were it not for the process of preparing the line so Branson could play with it, the route's modernisation would be finished already. Despite the ageing infrastructure, BR handed the line to Railtrack in 1994 with not a single speed restriction in force.

Virgin has already had its knuckles rapped for claims it made in the *Times*; and the ASA criticised a travel promotion which "had caused unnecessary disappointment" to travellers.

Thameslink might also have disappointed travellers if anyone had believed its leaflet boasting of trains "every 15 minutes". The company said this was a "concise" description of its service. But as the ASA found: "Sometimes intervals between trains were more than 30 minutes in duration and only two trains departed in each hour."

A complaint against Connex SouthCentral was upheld as the ASA was unhappy with a poster proclaiming "Connex express every half an hour" between London and Brighton. Regular passengers might think "Connex express" a contradiction in terms, but the ASA objection centred on the chunks of the day when the trains are not half-hourly.

It's not only passengers who are not amused by the rail companies' attempts to con them. The ASA has upheld two complaints against Great Eastern Railway over publicity for fares between Ipswich and London. The complaints were made by... Anglia Railways.

*'Dr B. Ching'*

# Rotten Boroughs

## Bradford

**"NEW" Labour's "New Deal for Communities" cash has been seized on with glee by the Old Labourites who run Bradford council. But their choice of which area should receive the money has caused fury among opposition councillors.**

The £50m is to be spent in Bradford's Park Lane after Labour councillors rushed through a decision based on a two-page report which contained no feasibility study and made no mention of the equal claims of other areas of the city.
FACT: Park Lane is in the Little Horton ward which Labour narrowly held with a massively reduced majority of 27 last May.
ANOTHER FACT: Coun Ian Greenwood, the council's Labour leader, is up for election this coming May in... Little Horton.

## Fat Cat of the Week

**CONGRATULATIONS to Labour councillor Milton Babulall, who has claimed Islington's highest expenses (nearly £10,000) for the third year running.**

Although the 65-year-old chairs the social services committee, what pushes his workload into overload is chairing the standing advisory committee on religious education (for which there is a big call in the God-fearing borough) and presiding over the lesbian and gay committee (which meets twice a year and has no budget). However, LOFIT's ignominious end does not seem to have blighted the career of Jim Gee. Although he never worked at LOFIT, not only did he write the LOFIT business plan but he helped Field write the green paper on welfare reform. Gee, who once worked for the ALG before serving time in Lambeth council, is now at Richmond House, Whitehall, where he earns £75,000 a year in the new post of anti-fraud supremo for the National Health Service. More experienced civil servants than Gee may decide his business plan for the NHS is worth a second look.

## Leeds

**AS predicted in *Eye* 963 Labour's selection process in the Chapel Allerton ward in Leeds has been rerun after invalid votes were counted during the controversial deselection of popular black councillor Norma Hutchinson.**

To the dismay of supporters of local MP Fabian Hamilton, Coun Hutchinson easily won the nomination the second time around.

Meanwhile Hamilton continues to have trouble with the law following the decision by some of his Labour party "comrades" to prosecute him over breaches of the companies act (*Eyes passim*). He has just been fined £100 for driving at 58mph in a 40mph zone.

*"She's pressing charges — seems she burnt her lips on your porridge"*

## Curse of Gnome

***EYE* readers who recall Roy Evans' successful libel action against Lord Gnome in 1995 over his involvement in plans to build a rubbish tip in Kirkby, were saddened to learn that he has been ousted as manager of Liverpool FC.**

## Brentwood

**AN unusual cover-up is going on in the Essex borough of Bentwood where hundreds of pages of hardcore porn have been downloaded on to the town hall office computer by two councillors who used their passwords to log on.**

Because the material is text and not pictures Inspector Knacker's hands are tied, as it were, and no proceedings can apparently take place. Leaders on the hung council refuse to finger the two culprits, but Bentwood taxpayers want to know what precautions they are taking to prevent elected members abusing the system again.

## Crook of the Week

**MALDON councillor and former mayor Keith Munnion faces a spot of porridge or, if he's lucky, a hefty fine after admitting to Essex magistrates that he had taken part in benefit fraud.**

Munnion received more than £5,000 in income support and housing benefit after failing to declare three private pensions. But taxpayers should think again before coming down on him too heavily.

When questioned by Inspector Knacker, Munnion claimed that although he knew his mounting debts would soon force him into bankruptcy and therefore resignation from office, he fiddled benefits so he could "continue to work for the people of Maldon as a town councillor". How touching.

## Enfield

**THUGGISH Richard Course, the *Eye*'s least favourite former Enfield councillor, wants another chance to misrepresent the people of east Middlesex.**

Course plans to stand as a "socialist" at a by-election in December unless Labour puts up a "good, clean socialist". Since the latter scenario is extremely unlikely, and Course will most probably go before voters, it is worth highlighting some of the more interesting aspects of his CV.

A former executive director of the League Against Cruel Sports, he once described the Duke of Edinburgh as a "cretinous royal skinhead of low intelligence and high hypocrisy". And he was convicted last March of driving his car through a crowd of protesters whom he had described as "pot-bellied lager louts". He was fined £150 with £143 costs.

## Down in the Dumps

**AN internal Westminster council memo reveals that Tony Lear, director of environment and planning, is not simply "on leave" as the council insists: he is leaving the council for good. The reasons for his departure are distinctly hazy.**

Lear, who oversaw the work of rubbish company Onyx at Westminster (the council is likely to lose its charter mark for cleanliness), should not be too displeased, however. A glance at other recently departed municipal directors and chief executives reveals that he can probably look forward to a well-cushioned future.

Charles Woods, chief executive at Bent council, received a six-figure pay-off on top of his comfortable pension when he left his rotten borough. The pay-off was sanctioned by Bent's external auditor Price Waterhouse. Woods soon found work as a consultant for the head hunting division of, er, Price Waterhouse.

Dennis Roberts, head of Bent human resources, was pensioned off by the council after a long period of illness. He also undertakes consultancy work since his retirement from municipal life. Then there is Bill Phillips, chief executive at Westminster under Shirley Porter, who received a £1m bye-bye from the dame. He now finds solace as a consultant headhunter for JSB Associates.

# Pseuds Corner

**The faxes slide, slither and slip, as lubricious as genital skin dowsed in sexual lubricant, and are disorderly. Their pages offer literary surrealisms from time to time, but these are too small a compensation for those that are upside down or twice as long as they should be, as well as in a floppy jumble. Pelion slides from the desk. Ossa, half-sorted, remains in place, but "Sod it", I say, "a pox on all facsimilists" — and into the waste-paper bin their slimy, soapy, mucus papers go.**

**BRIAN SEWELL**
**Independent**

*Ted [Hughes] was one of those landmarks that following generations of poets took their bearing from. Now that he's gone, I think people are feeling the wind blowing around them. I've had poets on the phone all day saying: "What do we do now?"*

**DON PATERSON**
**Observer**

Alanis Morisette's new album explores her neuroses after the monstrous success of her debut.

**The Times**

The highly talented Spanish painter Salvador Dali achieved great acclaim for his "surreal" and flamboyant ideas. Dali's outstanding portfolio caught the imagination — just like Rolf East. If you are looking for a new perspective on property, whether buying or selling a period masterpiece, artist's cottage or a modern work of art, call us today.

**Advertisement**
**Ealing Gazette**

In Nike's huge department store called Niketown the trainer has its own cathedral. But this is an anachronism, because the trainer itself is our contemporary cathedral. It's not that trainer sweat is a secular modern form of incense, though trainers do indeed smell like teen spirit. It's just that trainers aren't simply shoes. The trainer is our new template of architecture. Trainer design has invaded everything, and chunkiness is everywhere. While the cathedral was a monument to the glory of God, the trainer has become a post-monumental symbol to values of freedom and equality.

**JOHN O'REILLY**
**Guardian**

A boiled egg, you see, is not merely an egg that has been boiled. It is a self-contained package, an

irresistible alliance, of violence and nursery rhymes. To get into it, you must destroy it.

**TERRY DURACK**
**Independent on Sunday**

In the 1990s the trainer has transcended all previous conventions and rules of fashion and footwear. As an object it has the status of a modern archetype because simply by definition the archetype is something that resolves contradictions. The trainer is both fashion and anti-fashion, shoe and anti-shoe. It denotes both uniformity and the expression of non-conformity, the casual and the active. It is hard to conceive of a more synthetic object in the history of footwear yet it is sold by laying claim to some instinctive, natural energy — just do it.

**JOHN O'REILLY**
**Guardian**

CONTRIBUTORS: C. Hassall, Lord Biro, Philip Nelson, Tim Harrison, Peter Chadwick, I. Popper, David Pearson.

**£10 paid for entries**

# Letters

## Amsterdamned

*Sir,*

*Your decision to reveal the — probably accurate — details of Ron Davies' night out on the common (13 November) is a serious error of judgement on your part. The man paid the price for his indiscretion and that should be that. Have you never put it about and kept it to yourself? Have you never lied about a sexual escapade you feel you shouldn't have had? Reply "no" and you're either an angel or a liar.*

*What is the difference between the NEWS OF THE SCREWS "revelations" you so often hammer and what you printed about Davies' fateful night? Do you think it's ok because your readership is more upper crust?*

*You might present yourself as a liberal but I suspect you're just another sexually repressed Brit with good ol' Victorian values buried deep in your psyche.*

*Over here in the Netherlands, we give slightly less than a flying fuck what our politicians do in their private lives. Once they clock off, their lives are theirs. Generally, we're more realistic about what it means to be human than you "Ugandan relation" obsessives. Never mind, sells papers, doesn't it?*

*Yours,*
*THIJS DEKKER,*

*Amsterdam, Netherlands.*

## Ron target?

*Sir,*

*Ron Davies "resigned" from the cabinet, he's lost a great future in the Welsh assembly, the tabloids have brutally gay-bashed him. And then you go and put him on the cover...*

*I've read PRIVATE EYE for years and this is the first time I've felt bound to ask why you couldn't have shown a little compassion and restraint. He is a political has-been, suffering mental anguish — couldn't you have just left the guy alone and gone for someone powerful?*

*Yours sincerely,*
*SOPHY HESELTINE,*

*Totnes.*

## Boise, Idunno

*Sir,*

*Is "the not very well known city of Boise, Indiana" mentioned in Media News, EYE 963, by any chance related to the rather better-known city of Boise, Idaho?*

*Yours faithfully,*
*G. GREEN,*

*Nottingham.*

# QUOTE OF THE WEEK

**Do you read *Private Eye*? What do you most like about England?**
*Ifor Williams, Gwynedd*
**I do not read *Private Eye* but am told I feature regularly. It's nice to be popular and give people pleasure. For satire with real bite and spice I read *Punch*. England's best qualities are its tolerance and good humour.**

**Mohamed Al-Fayed**
*Independent Review*

## Lookalike

**Nero** **Clinton**

*Sir,*

*It seemed to me that the enclosed two faces, ie that of the Emperor Nero, and the photo of President Clinton, showed remarkable facial similarity. I wonder whether it rests there, or whether comparison would lead one further...*

*Yours faithfully,*
*R. WALSH,*

*West Sussex.*

"Peter Mandelson... is one of the shrewdest political brains I have ever met, a charming man, a great and funny companion and adored by most of the women he knows. He also has a remarkable ability to communicate with young people in a way in which they don't feel patronised. These qualities, heaven knows, are rare enough these days. Mandelson has been badly hurt by sexual terrorism of the Parris variety, though you will never hear him complain."

*RICHARD STOTT*
*News of the World*

## Off Our Trolley

*Sir,*

*I've just started reading EYE 963. In the article about the Walkergate supermarket development in Nick Brown's constituency you state that the development now proposes to cover only 30,000 acres, instead of the original 80,000.*

*I'm no surveyor, but that's going to be some corner shop. At 30,000 acres that's enough to entirely cover Mr Brown's constituency in shelving, and still have enough left over for one or two more.*

*Have you got a map to hand? If so look for Loch Leven in Fife, it covers an area of roughly 3,000 acres, multiply by 10. Enough to make your blood run cold!!*

*Regards,*
*BOB TAYLOR,*

*Via e-mail.*

● *It should have said "square feet" not acres. Sorry.*

## A Tiny error?

*Sir,*

*Your columnist (In The City) writes that during the recent Rowland v Fayed trial that I suffered "an uncomfortable time in court trying to remember how he came by certain documents from the Rowland box." That is untrue.*

*As the enclosed transcript of the trial shows, I was deliberately not asked by Rowland's lawyers about the source of the documents which I had used in a newspaper article to show that Tiny Rowland's fortune was based on a horrific fraud perpetuated in 1954 by him against a Swiss bank.*

*I am not surprised by the misrepresentation of the trial record by your columnist. He has made an industry and his living by successive misrepresentations on Rowland's behalf. I trust they will meet up again in the after-life.*

*Sincerely,*
*TOM BOWER,*

*London NW3.* *( See Slicker. Ed.)*

## Rógering Rogers

*Sir,*

*Richard Coleman's ambiguous letter in EYE 963 regarding conservation as interpreted by the three Richards (Rogers, MacCormac and Coleman) rings a little hollow with regard to the former.*

*Could this be the same Richard Rogers who, when he bought 12/13 St Leonard's Terrace, Chelsea (a grade II listed building), carefully removed every vestige of period detail from the interior? — with not a squeak from Kensington & Chelsea council! He then created a series of open-plan rooms painted white throughout which may be viewed from the street since he rarely closes the tasteful venetian blinds that adorn the windows. As a former neighbour, I was obliged to team up with another and take out an injunction to prevent Rogers from adding a fashionable atrium the height of the late Georgian/early Victorian building (which would have blocked all light from our gardens) but I see that his fascination with glass has been visited on poor Battersea in one of his current projects. Despite strenuous objections from Wandsworth council, pretty little Battersea Old Church is to be dwarfed by a ghastly cheese-shaped chunk of glass immediately to its east which, to my mind, has little to do with conservation but all to do with an enormous and arrogant ego that doesn't care much what others think, except that they are the poor saps who will have to **look** at his bloody buildings!*

*Yours faithfully,*
*TOM KNOWLES,*

*London SW6.*

## Lookalike

**Mo** **Mel**

*Sir,*

*Has anyone else noticed the remarkable resemblance between that talented, well built comedian Mr Mel Smith, and Mo Mowlam, the secretary of state for Northern Ireland? Perhaps they are related.*

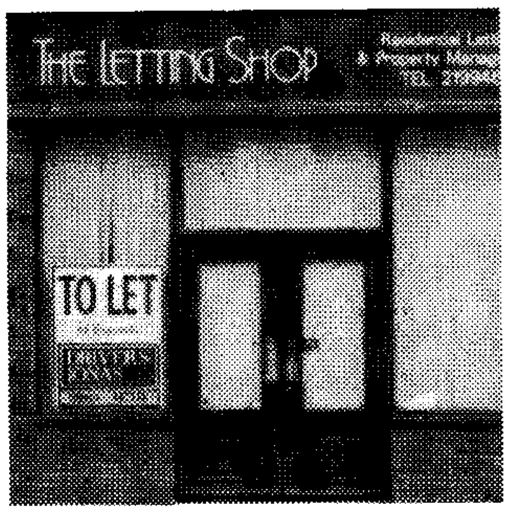
*Yours faithfully,*
*DR PAUL MALE,*

*Bristol.*

**Murdoch made it clear before the three days of interviewing that he would not discuss his new girlfiend, Wendy Deng, 31,**

*The Observer*

# I-SPY




***Norwich***
**(submitted by T.J. Wells)**

£10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

## Left out

*Sir,*

*It will come as a revelation to former members of the REBECCA MAGAZINE cooperative (which I chaired) that "achingly boring Alun Michael" was a "one time hack on the distinctly lefty REBECCA MAGAZINE" (Eye, 13 November). Sadly, our aspiring National Assembly leader is not entitled to add such radical Welsh credentials to his street credibility. Having checked with former REBECCA colleagues, none of us can recall any contribution from Mr Michael, achingly boring or otherwise. We wonder who could possibly be making such claims, and why now?*

*Yours faithfully,*
*MIKE JOSEPH,*

*Vale of Glamorgan.*

## Statistically speaking

*Sir,*

*Few mathematical topics are as strewn with pitfalls as probability theory, and (Letters, EYE 963) Caroline Richmond has fallen into one. She writes that the probability that a theoretical heart surgeon who botches four operations in a hundred might have four consecutive failures, is $(1/25)^4$, or 1 in 390,625. This is simply not true; the figure she gives is the probability that four **specified** operations (eg, the next four) are botched.*

*The probability that **any** four consecutive operations are botched depends on the number of operations considered. It is obvious that if each operation carries a small risk of disaster, then the more operations a surgeon performs the greater the odds of a run of failures. Mathematicians call it the Law of Large Numbers: "If a thing can happen, however unlikely, sooner or later it will" (yes, it **is** the scientific basis for Murphy's Law). If the surgeon operates one hundred times in a year then the probability of four consecutive failures is nearly 87 times greater than the figure Ms Richmond gave, in fact 1 in 4490.*

*My point is not merely technical. Ms Richmond used her spurious figures to mock the innumeracy of the medical profession ("oeuf sur la visage" I think); and to suggest that the likelihood of such a misfortune occurring by chance is very remote; whereas, when you consider that there are many more than 4,500 surgeons in the country, it is in fact extremely likely (given the assumptions) that each year one or more would experience this misfortune.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*PETER A. HINES,*

*Egham, Surrey.*

## Photo opportunity

*Sir,*

*Whilst suffering from insomnia on Sunday morning I happened to tune into Radio 5's new Sunday morning news programme.*

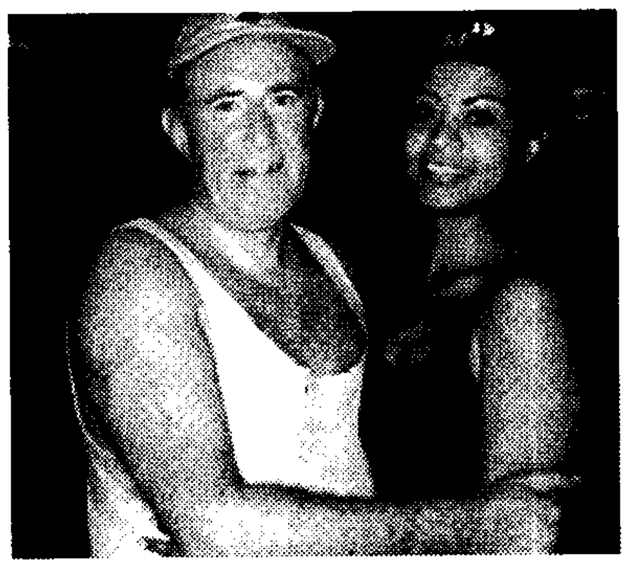
*The female guest reviewer of the Sunday rags touched on various articles concerning the Vicar's latest cool idea of forming a task force for young women. The panel of "influential" women to be invited to break bread with our leader and advise ministers on ways of boosting the self-esteem of our teenage girls includes Ms Halliwell, formerly known as Ginger Spice, pop star Billie, heptathlete Denise Lewis and "to add intellectual ballast", therapist Susie Orbach, a former confidante of Diana, Princess of Wales.*

*The presenter who runs this show, whom I might add has found his true niche on the wireless, interrupted with an extremely smutty laugh and quipped "that he would love to offer his services as an icon to teenage girls and sit on such a committee".*

*Somewhere in your pictorial library of icons I think you have a picture of him in his full glory as an admirer of the young and I think it should be printed again for all your female teenage readers to make their own judgement.*

*Kind regards,*
*TIM WHITE,*

*London W12.*



## Deer hunter

*Sir,*

*A court ruling on the subject of whooping cough vaccination damage in 1986 (the Loveday Case) reads "...the plaintiff fails to satisfy me on the balance of probability that pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine can cause permanent brain damage in young children. It is possible that it does; the contrary cannot be proved..." To quote just the first sentence of this ruling, and omit all reference to the second sentence, renders any refutation of the claim about such damage worthless — which might be another reason for including mention of Brian Deer's "otherwise exhaustive investigation" in your Street of Shame (13 November).*

*Yours faithfully,*
*ROSEMARY FOX,*

*Hon Sec, Association of Parents of Vaccine Damaged Children.*

**8.00 UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE** With Jeremy Clarkson. *(T)* 3357

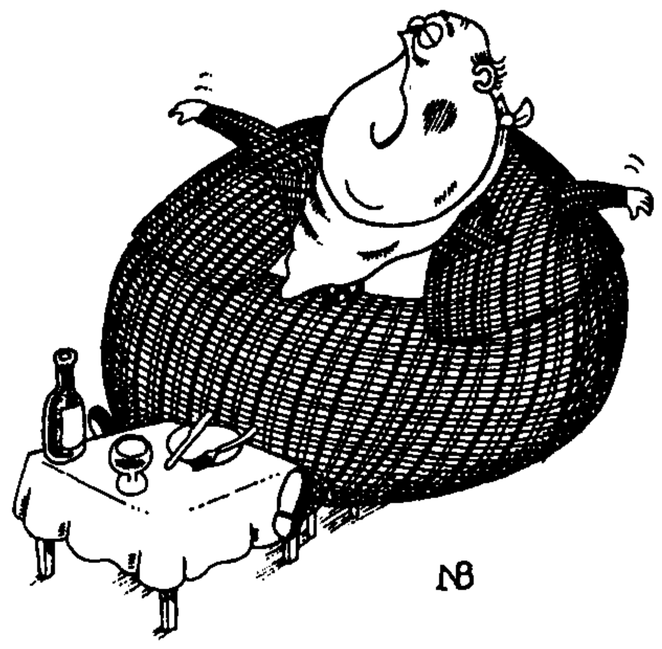
*Daily Express*

The Private Eye Team will be signing copies of:

**The 1998 Private Eye Annual**
**St Albion Parish News**
**Colemanballs 9**

at Waterstone's,
1-7 Whittington Ave.,
Leadenhall Market,
London EC3
on Tuesday 1 December
from 1.00pm - 2.00pm
To reserve signed copies contact
Waterstones on 0171 220 7882

# NEW OLD SAYINGS




**Soames wasn't built in a day**

## Reich-winger

*Sir,*

*Having made over the years quite an industry out of exposing typos in the GRAUNIAD and other organs, you should really be more careful.*

*In the TIMES, Letters to the Editor (EYE 962), you describe Margaret Thatcher as c/o The Little Sisters of the Rich, whereas any fule no that it should have read Little Sisters of the Reich.*

*Yours sincerely,*
*PATRICK SHORT,*

*London W11.*

# Colemanballs

*£10 paid for contributions*

*"This is a man [Ron Davies] who has been working his backside off in recent times."*
**STEPHEN POUND MP, BBC2**
**(Tim Lovejoy)**

*"Anelka's still scoring goals, and he's there to miss them which is never a bad thing."*
**KEVIN KEEGAN, ITV**
**(Robert Guy)**

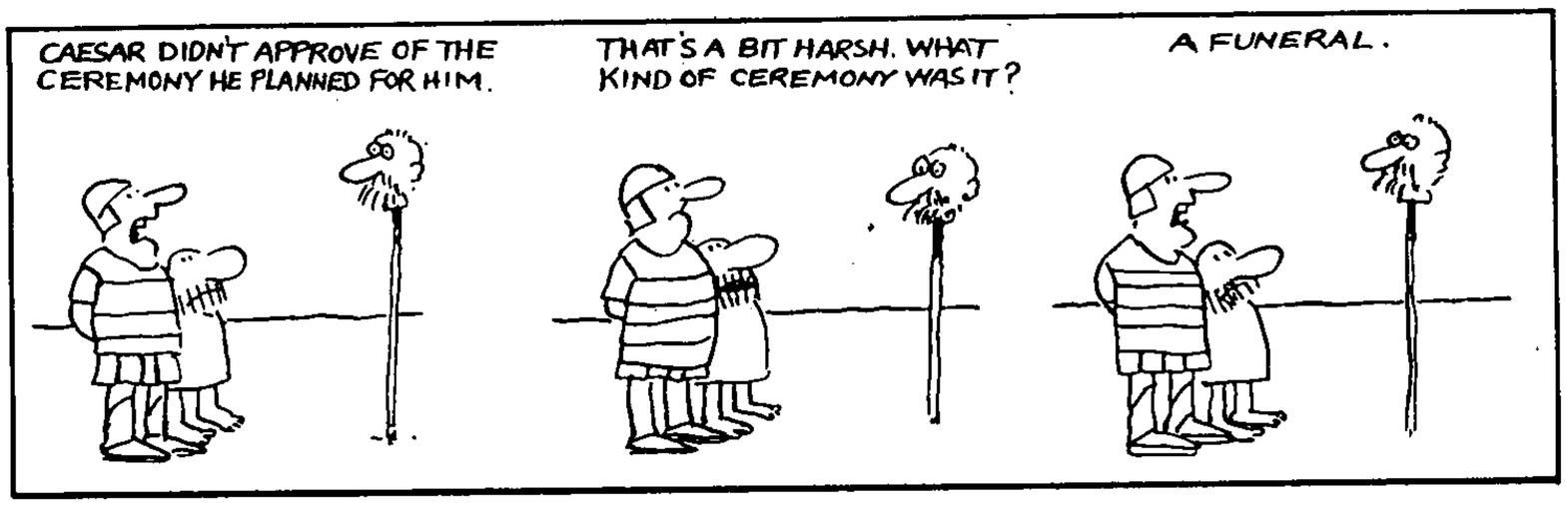
*"He reminds me of a completely different version of Robbie Earle..."*
**MARK LAWRENSON, Radio 5**
**(Mark Rubens)**

***Dave Pearce**: So, pick a number between one and six.*
***Contestant**: Eight.*
**Radio 1**
**(Gareth Hall)**

*"Of the bisexual men [who phoned a research phone line] only a small percentage identified themselves as lesbian or gay."*
**ADRIAN COYLE (Lecturer, Surrey University), Radio 4**
**(Simon Moss)**

# HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



# FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

● **"We just cannot afford to be sentimental about this," the chief inspector of Helsingborg crematorium, Borje Stolt, told church and council authorities in Southern Sweden. "Cremation is an energy-intensive business, using up to twelve litres of oil per incineration, and we are an environmentally-conscious country, so why should we stop heating local homes with the energy from the burning bodies? I see nothing wrong in the principle that Swedes should contribute to a cleaner environment even after death."**

**Pastor Henrik Nystrom from Boras (a nearby town where the crematorium furnace has been heating local houses for the past year) strongly disagreed: "I have a very serious problem with this. It is a shocking idea, disrespectful of the dead and of the bereaved. No one in their right mind would want to heat their house with the burning corpse of a loved one. Where will it all end?"**

**But Pastor Nystrom was outvoted after Borje Stolt explained further. "Accusations that we are enriching ourselves from the bodies of the deceased are totally inaccurate. If crematoria did not cooperate with the energy companies, they would have to release the excess heat and the poisonous gases into the environment. And to do that safely, we would have to install cooling and purifying apparatus, which would use yet more oil, and the energy company would still have to generate the energy our corpses currently provide. If only people had been properly informed before this meeting, then there wouldn't have been all this fuss."** *(ACCA [Australian Cemetery & Cremation News], Spring 1998. Spotter: Norm Reynolds)*

—●—

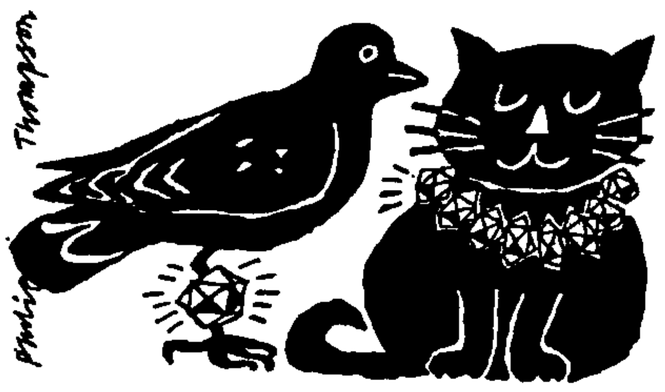
● "I was taking a nap while on duty in the Lake McIlwaine National Park," former Zimbabwean game ranger Stanford Chambe told The People's Voice, "when the attack took place. A python crept up to me, coiled itself around me, and began to swallow me, head first. They do it very gently, coating your body with saliva as a lubricant as they swallow. I was inside the python up to my knees by the time I realised what was happening, and I only managed to get out again with great difficulty. I was lucky to escape with my life, but three weeks later I went cross-eyed, all my body hair fell out, I could no longer have an erection, and I became short-sighted. Eventually I had to give up my job. The python attack was obviously to blame, so I am demanding immediate compensation from the National Parks committee."

A National Parks official conceded that Chambe had been attacked, but declined to offer any compensation. "First of all, the attack took place in 1976. Secondly, there's no medical proof that python saliva causes baldness or impotence. And thirdly, he was supposed to be on duty, yet he was fast asleep, so he deserves all he got. Anyway, we phoned the chairman of the Herpetological Society yesterday, and when we told him about Chambe's claim he said he'd never heard such junk in all his life. So all in all we don't feel a cash settlement would be appropriate. " *(The Star & South African Times, 21/10/98. Spotter: Raymond Siff)*

—●—

● *"There is a saying that a cat always finds its way home, and that is why people are using them for gem smuggling," Chief Inspector Clarky McKay of the Namibian Police's Protected Resources Unit told reporters. "And it is also why we have given orders that cats and pigeons will not be allowed in the mining fields of the NamDeb Diamond Corporation. Make no mistake. We will shoot them. Rules are rules."*

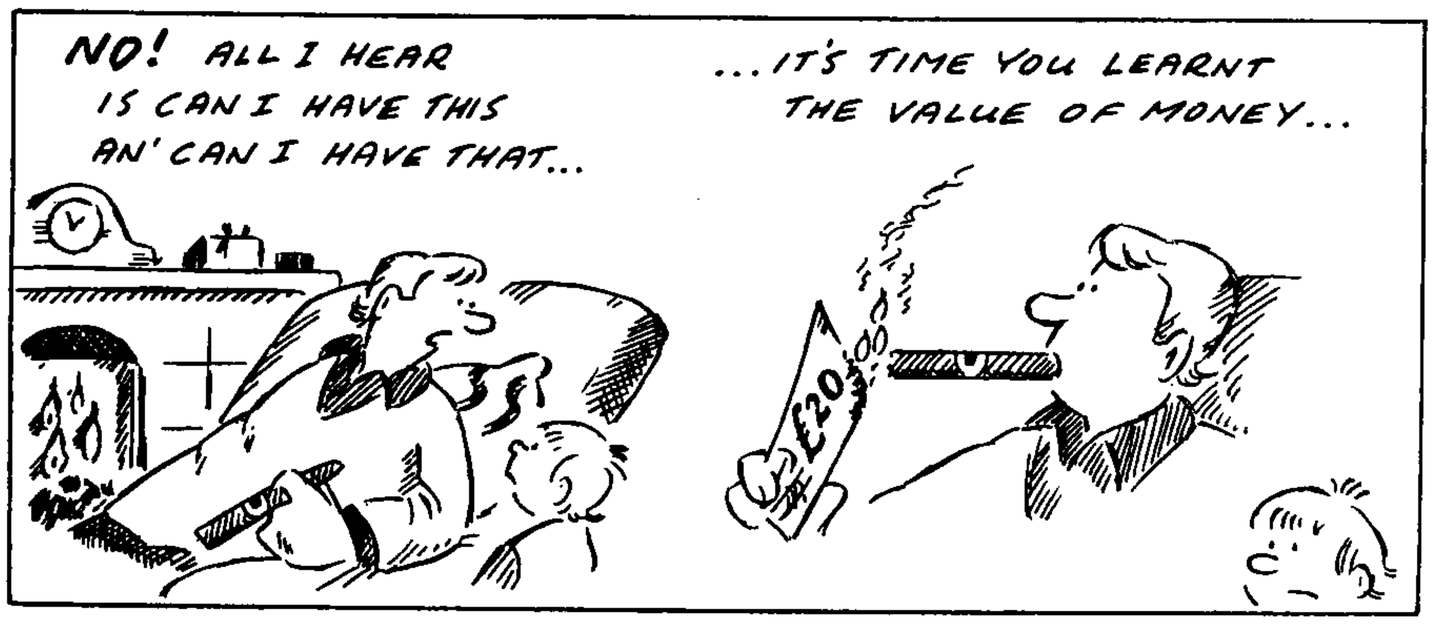
*Cat owners and homing pigeon enthusiasts in the nearby Namibian/South-African border*



*towns of Oranjemund and Alexander Bay expressed outrage at the decision, but Chief Inspector McKay was adamant. "Rules are rules. We know that workers are using these animals to smuggle out gems from the mine. In June, we shot down a pigeon that had 60,000 rands worth of uncut diamonds strapped to its chest, and in April we arrested four men who were using cats to illegally export gem stones. So, if you keep cats or homing pigeons, and you don't want them shot full of holes, then you'd better not release them anywhere near the mine. Rules are rules."* (Republic of Namibia News, 10/10/98. Spotter: Darren Ingram)

## *The Lottery Winners*

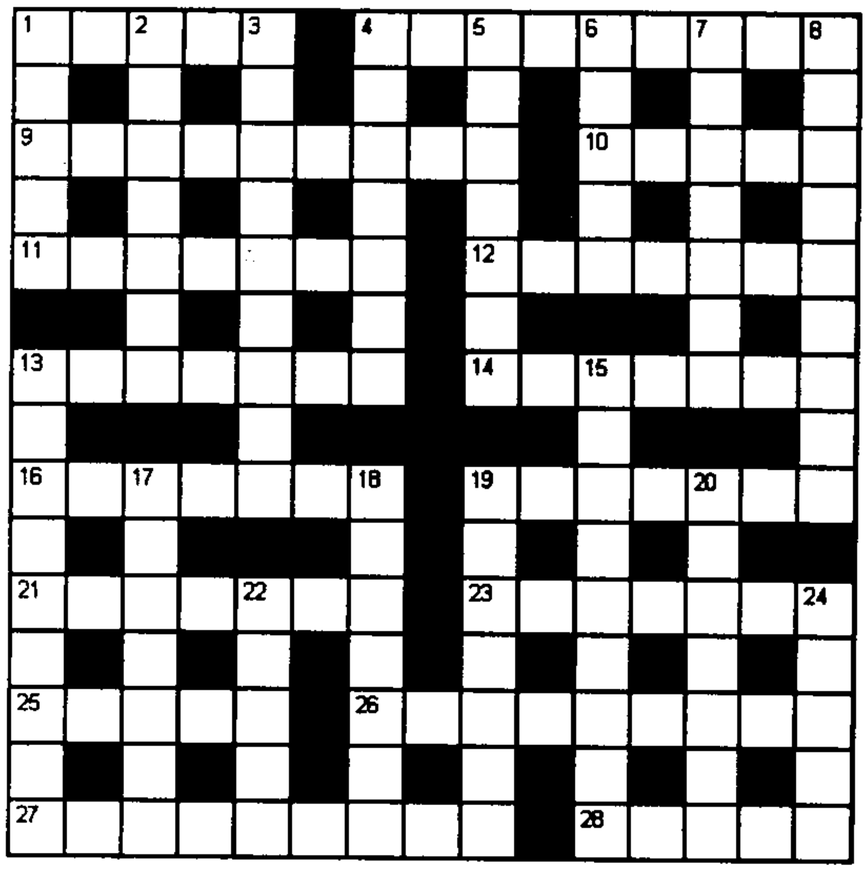
TURNER




# EYE CROSSWORD 119

by Cyclops

*£100 prize*



ACROSS

1 Outside broadcast abandons filthy row (5)
4 Like a bum taking GCE, is wrecked by morphine (9)
9/2/26 Common lamentable lapse of good sense by top politician? (1,8,5,2,9)
10 Honest-to-goodness male – Brenda's province? (5)
11 Brands carried by no-hope lovers (7)
12 Acted like a poser, full of holes (7)
13 Favoured Field getting out – he doesn't share the orthodox view (7)
14 Dancer makes arse-over-tip dash to get our mag. before five (7)
16 (see 7)
19 Took the piss – got well stuffed (7)
21 Stupid gits Ed's organised to produce news summaries (7)
23 Mean woman stuck inside a long time (7)
25 Well-rounded in bathrobe (see-through) (5)
26 (see 9)
27 Many constituents petitioning their MP, a deserting pisspoor abysmal s.o.b. (4,5)
28 Drunk giving head to Brenda (5)

DOWN

1 Do the dirty on Ray (5)
2 (see 9)
3 A great organ on dog, purely for cosmetic purposes (3,6)
4 Agitated state getting vice-president to protect or back his country ... (7)
5 ... the vice-president really tried to get elected – failure ... (4-3)
6 ... stabbed in the back, perhaps, vice-president fashion? (5)
7/16 The PM, once demolished Brian Walden-style, er ... leaves (7,7)
8 It's Bill's place to present gaily over-the-top Trimble (4,5)
13 Socially unacceptable adventurous sailor, not giving head, comes before bench (2,3,4)
15 The president stuffing First Lady and Lewinsky (head only) in hen-house (9)
17 Incapable of getting member reduced in size (7)
18 Soundly understands business of hooter operation (4,3)
19 Support rock band in the pen (5,2)
20 Far out politician embraces EU – it's a conspiracy! (5-2)
22 Nick, we hear, the old party leader (5)
24 Put down Carpenters' piece (5)

**£100 prize to first solution opened on 4.12.98. Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.**

## Solution to Crossword No. 118

**Winner: RODNEY JONES**

ACROSS: 1 Max Clifford 7 Jog 9 Mandela 10 Humdrum 11 Imps 12 Childbirth 14 Snorter 15 Apostle 17 Reefers 19 Endemic 21 Dick Turpin 23 I-spy 25 Old Nick 26 Oddment 27 Dye 28 Eurosceptic

DOWN: 1 Memoirs 2 Xenophobe 3 Lies 4 Flasher 5 Ophelia 6 Dumb blonde 7 Juror 8 Gumshoe 13 Utter tripe 16 Tumescent 17 Redwood 18 Striker 19 Editors 20 Cryptic 22 Cadge 24 Adie.

# PRINCESS PENNY'S TABLOID HELL

by Our Royal Staff
**Lady Antonia Holden**

**PRINCESS Penny of Junor last night made a formal protest to the Press Complaints Committee over "the disgraceful intrusion of the press into her private life".**

The Princess was in tears last night as she recounted how members of the Paparazzi had staked out her £1 million home, taken pictures of her walking her dog and even written nasty things about her.

"I couldn't believe it," she said. "I have done nothing to deserve this. I have led a blameless life being paid a fortune to write intrusive rubbish about the Royal Family. Why have they picked on me?"

## Penny Whinger

Princess Penny inherited her title and her job from her father, the late King Jonah the First of Auchtermuchty.

However, the tabloids were unrepentant. Said David Yellow, Editor of the Daily Bum, "She is a public figure and a member of the Royal circle. The public have a right to know where and when she goes to the toilet."

TV

## Pick Of The Day

**ITV 8.00pm**
*"The Sex Trade"*
PANORAMA investigates the seedy world of television executives who unashamedly sell sex to the general public.

**BBC1 9.00pm**
*"The Naked Truth"*
HEART Of The Matter investigates the growing number of people who believe taking off their clothes will get them on television.

**Channel 4 10.00pm**
*"Anatomy of Filth"*
THE STRANGE twilight world of masochists who will watch third-rate pornography posing as journalism instead of going out and renting a decent video from Mr Patel.

**Channel 5 9.00am – 12.00pm**
*"Swedish Dentists Go Bonking Mad" (repeated all day).*
THE rites of passage story of an orphan girl brought up in apartheid-ruled South Africa in the 1950s *(shurely shome mishtake?)*

# THAT EDDIE GEORGE HONORARY DEGREE CITATION IN FULL

EDDIUS GEORGIUS GUBERNATOR BANKUM ANGLORUM NOTABILE PRO HISTORIAM COCKUPPES IN REGULATIONE INTERESTORUM RATORUM ET RESPONSIBILIS PRO RECESSIONE MAGNA CUM MULTES HOMINES IN DOLO IN TERRA GEORDIENSIS ET MIDLANDUS SED NON IN TUNBRIDGE WELLSIONIS DEO GRATIAS.

# OPERA LATEST

## Tales of Merrie England

# The Legend of Robinson Hood

**IN those days there lived a man called Robinson Hood who took from the poor and gave to the rich — particularly himself.**

**And he lived with his longtime love Maid Millions in an agreeable Tuscan villa far away from the ghastly poverty stricken Sherwood Forest.**

**Then one day the Sheriff of Nottingham discovered some anomalies in the Paymaster General's tax returns and sent out a warrant for the arrest of Robin Everyone and all of his merry accountants.**

### The Men in Greed

**When this news was heard abroad the Sheriff got a phone call from King Tony who told him to lay off, as Robin was "verily a good mate" and** *(cont. p. 94)*

## *WHAT YOU WON'T READ IN THE NEW STATESMAN*

(prop. G. Robinson)

Labour's Mr Sleaze — should he resign?
by Peter Wilby

Robinson — the unacceptable face of capitalism?
by a Man with a Beard

Geoffrey Grubbinson — don'tchahatehim?
by Cristina Odone

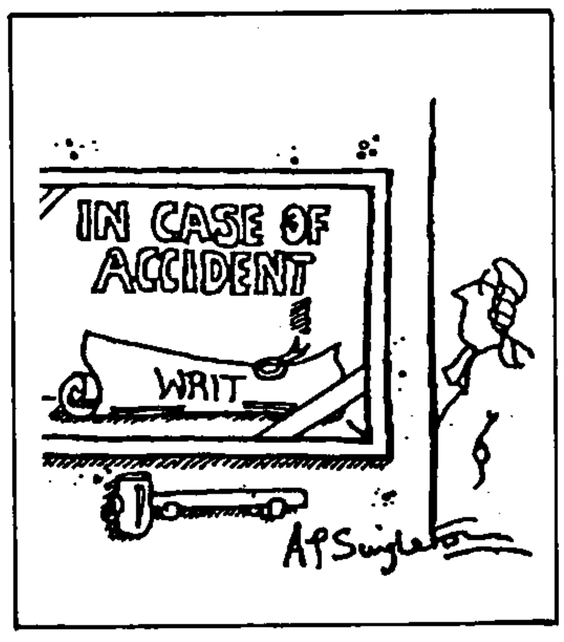
Christmas Books — How Robinson cooked them all

Disgusting cartoon of Robinson as a Giant Fat Cat defecating piles of money on a desert island
by Martin Rowson

Madame Bourgeois — a feminists' nightmare
by an Angry Woman

## *PLUS*

Diary by Senior DTI official



# ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

*Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)*

Hullo!

Well it has been quite a week hasn't it and I don't mind admitting that at the beginning of it, I was feeling a little bit tired. After all, it's a pretty demanding job trying to run this parish, and it's a job that some of you are not making any easier. I'm not naming names, but I think Mr Livingstone, Mr Morgan and a number of residents from the Old People's Home will know who I mean! Anyway it was very kind of various members of the PCC to express their concern that I was being overstretched, and to offer to step in and take over some of my duties. Their kind thoughts made me feel a lot better immediately and I am no longer tired at all.

No, if I am anything, I am angry. And what am I angry about?

Let me tell you what I am NOT angry about. I'm not angry because I am not getting my own way at the parish, as some people have suggested. I'm not angry at having all my plans for the parish rejected by people who don't know what they're talking about. So let's get that clear, before we go any further! No. What makes me angry — and sad — is that all the effort that we are putting in to make St Albion's a more efficient, modern, pivotal parish - and dare I say it, a "sexy" place to be! — all these efforts are being undermined by people complaining that there isn't enough democracy in this church. Look, I'm as much a believer in democracy and in people having the right to choose as the next man. But if we choose lots of people with different views, all arguing the toss, what sort of democracy is that? After all, Our Lord picked 12 disciples to follow him, not to argue with him! And wasn't that a perfect example of what I call a "closed list".We don't

find any stories in the Bible about the good people of Palestine being invited to elect the disciples — and if we do find anything in the Bible like that, I think it would be only right that we should cut it out!

Look! The point I'm making is spelled out absolutely clearly in the words of the parable, "Many are called, but only a few selected names are chosen." *(Book of Despots 7,14).*

So, let me put it all in a nutshell. Of course, I want you all to be involved in the parish. In our focus groups. On our flower rota. Doing all the humdrum jobs that are necessary to keep the parish running smoothly. And of course I want you to choose who does which jobs. All I am asking is that you choose the same people that I do! It's your parish, I'm just here to run it!

Yours

Tony

**FROM THE CHURCHWARDEN**

*I am not going to Brazil this week because I have discovered that I have an extremely important session of the PCC Sub-Committee On Hassocks to attend. My decision to cancel my trip has nothing to do with the rumours being spread about me by certain parishioners in the Cool Britannia Arms and I have no particular desire to go to Brazil anyway. I shall not be "discussing Brazil" in this space again. I hope that is clear.*

*P.M.*

## NOTICES

● **Mr Blunkett**, the Chairman of our School Governors, would like to inform parents that in future, any pupils found taking drugs on school premises will be dealt with extremely strictly. Offenders will be instantly given counselling, and repeated offenders will be asked to see P.C. Straw, who understands all about these problems.

● *Good news* from **Mr Dobson** who runs the St Albion's Hospice. There's been a great improvement on the waiting list front. The waiting list is now only 780 people. This represents a significant decrease from last year's figure of 700. (Well done, Frank! T.B.)

● *More Good News* from **Mr Brown**, our Treasurer, who tells me that our church finances are in excellent shape, regardless of the fact that we're a bit short of money.

## *To Remember In Your Prayers*

**Let us remember** in our prayers all those who are in hardship or in difficulty, especially our friend Mr Robinson, who has suffered a terrible loss of memory over some of his business dealings. Let us give thanks for his full and frank apology and let us remember that he had done nothing wrong and therefore had nothing to apologise for.

**Let us remember** also our American friend, the Reverend William Jefferson Clinton of the Church of the Seven Day Fornicators, and help him to put the past behind him so that he can move forward. Help us to remember that, like Mr Robinson, he had done nothing and help us to forgive him for whatever it is he didn't do.

**The vicar agrees that church finances are looking healthy!**

## *A Message from Mrs. Jay, Matron of the St. Albion's Home for Distressed Gentlefolk*

Like the Vicar, I'm not angry with the old people for the way they have behaved in the last few weeks and in particular I am not angry with them for disagreeing with me in public. However I do think it might be for the best if the Vicar closed the place down and threw the troublemakers out onto the streets. (Straight talking there, Margaret! T.B.)

P.S. Mr Robinson tells me that the Home is on a prime site, and could be turned into a first-class supermarket.

*M. Jay (Daughter of Rev. Callaghan)*

THAT PRINCE CHARLES 50th BIRTHDAY SKETCH IN FULL

# BROWNNOSER THE THIRD

**starring Rowan Atkinson as *Rowan Brownnoser* and Prince Charles as *Baldgit***

**Brownnoser**: Truly, sire, I am about as sycophantic as the winner of the Annual Sycophantic Competition at Sycophants' College, Cambridge. *(Laughter)*

**Baldgit**: I have a cunning plan to make myself more popular by hob-nobbing with people from the television! *(More fawning laughter)*

**Brownnoser**: Brilliant idea, Your Majesty! *(Aside)* No one out-bottomkisses me in the princely posterior department.

**Baldgit:** Ying Tong Tiddle I-Po!

**Brownnoser**: Fantastic, Sire! Did you know that my nose is as brown as the brownest Brownie who is browned off *(continued in similar vein for several hours)*.

*(Enter Rory Brownnose. Who else?)*

**Brownnose**: My next impression is of a man who'd like to be seen as a dangerous topical satirist, but who really enjoys playing tennis with Tony Blair and going to parties with Prince Charles!

*(Guests are carried out overcome with toadying hysteria)*

*"You're quite right — I* am *using the wrong service sheet"*

# LORD CHANCELLOR IN REFURBISHMENT ROW

by Our Heritage Correspondent **Brian R. Sewell**

**LORD IRVINE of Lairg has been strongly criticised after his decision to completely refurbish his official trousers.**

The Lord Chancellor has decided that the traditional black silk britches he wears at the moment are unsuitable for carrying out his duties — such as spending a great deal of taxpayers' money rewallpapering his toilet.

### 36 INCH INSIDE LAIRG

"I feel very uncomfortable wasting £300 on old-fashioned trousers," he said, "when I could be wasting £600,000 on Pugin-style loo-roll holders and matching towel rings."

After much research, Lord Irvine has chosen a pair of grey Marks and Spencer's "leisure slacks" (80% viscose, 20% rayon, machine washable drip-dry) to replace the silken leggings.

"These are much more suitable trousers," he concluded, "for the modern role of the Lord Chancellor, which is choosing soft furnishings, offending people at B&Q, and marrying colleagues' wives."

Lord Lairgover is ridiculous.

# HEATH'S PRIVATE VIEW

GODS AND MONSTERS
IAN MCKELLAN
THEY FOUND TWO LOST REELS ON A FARM IN KOSOVO. THEY WERE JUST ROTTING NITRATE!
42ND LONDON FILM FESTIVAL
I SAW THE DIRECTORS CUT OF THE 3 STOOGES CLASSIC 'WISEGUYS' ASTOUNDING!
JAMES WHALE THE FRANK-ENSTEIN DIRECTOR WAS GAY
UGH!
POPCORN IS VERBOTEN!
GOD! I HAD NO IDEA HE WAS STILL ALIVE!
BOOKS ON FILM
AVANT GARDE
DOOR KNOBS IN GERMAN SILENTS
IMAGE NOW
I WENT TO THE WRONG CINEMA AND SAW THE FILM 'TITANIC' BY MISTAKE. IT WAS MARVELLOUS
YOU MISSED THE MAN WHO LAUGHS WITH CONRAD VEIDT- JESUS WHAT A NIGHTMARE!
WEDDING MARCH
2
THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE
IT'S STILL SHOCKINGLY TAWDRY!
bfi
HEATH

# The Delia Telegraph

**Britain's biggest-selling quality daily** Friday, November 27, 1998


# Delia Can Sell Anything!

TV COOK Delia Smith has had the most extraordinary effect on the sales of anything related to her new series, it was revealed last night.

Figures released by the retail industry show that sales of aluminium pans rose by 1000 percent and the purchase of eggs has increased by 200,000 units per capita per day.

"It's amazing," said marketing expert Sarah Egg-sandwich. "Anything with Delia's name attached to it immediately sells like hotcakes."

"Who knows, maybe it will even work for the Daily Telegraph?"

## Exclusive Recipe
## Delia's Perfect Glass of Water

TAKE one glass (preferably made out of glass and without any holes in it) and place under the tap. I find cold water works better than hot — and here's a tip.

Let the cold tap (marked "C") run for a few seconds before filling the glass. Don't forget to turn off the tap when the glass is full — but don't turn it off too soon or you won't have any water.

With practise, you'll get the hang of it and you'll have a delicious and refreshing glass of water.

Serves one.

**This recipe is brought to you exclusively by the Delia Telegraph**

## Inside

More Delia News by our Delia Correspondent W.F. Delia *(That's not enough Delia. Eg)*

# 10 Ways For Hague To Make Himself Electable

You decide on how the People's Leader of the Opposition should look. Place in order of preference

**❶ Replace dull, Boycott-style Yorkshire accent with agreeable, classless, Islington voice.**

**❷ Put on Wogan-style wig to appear younger.**

**❸ Change name from "William" to "Tony".**

**❹ Spell Fion's name properly, or change to sensible, voter-friendly name like Cherie.**

**❺ Steal Aunt's lottery winnings and hand out to voters in key marginal constituencies.**

**❻ Arrange for Baroness Thatcher to be extradited to Argentina for war crimes.**

**❼ Form Ashdown-style alliance with New Labour in return for seat in Cabinet as Welsh Secretary.**

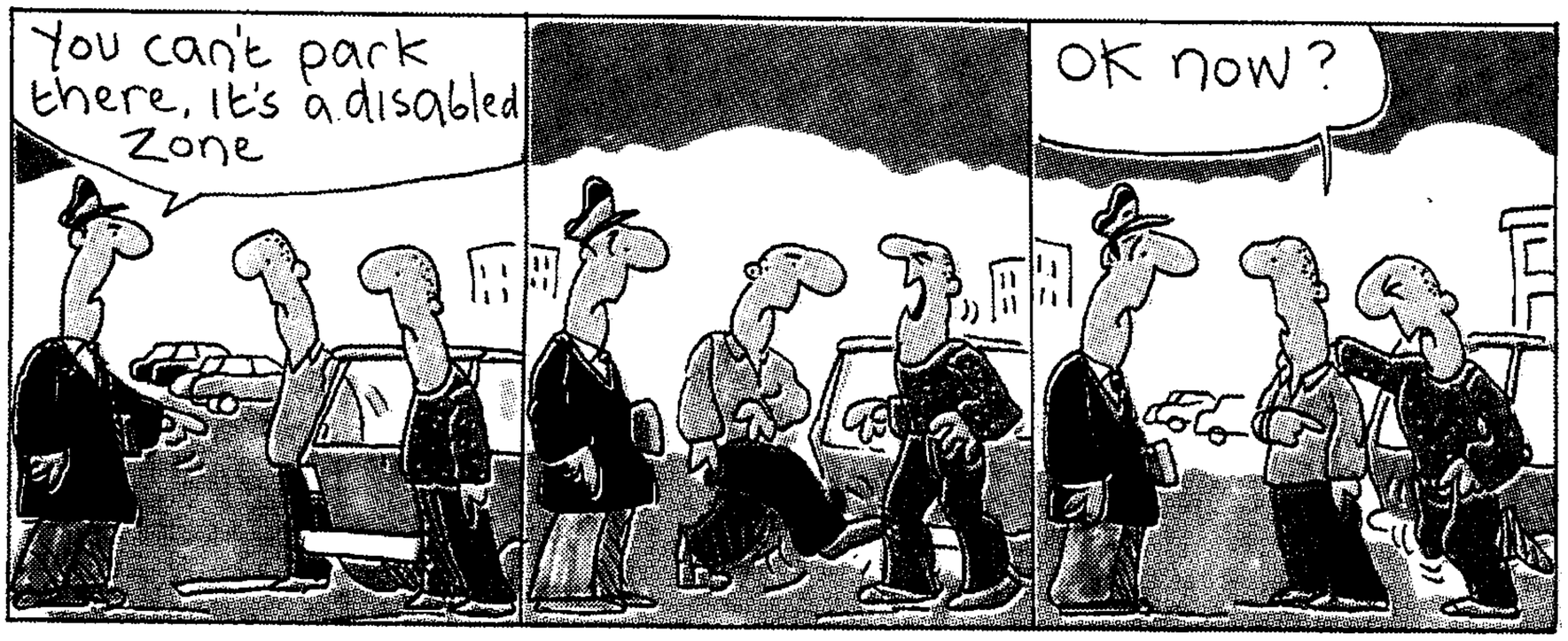
**❽ Resign in favour of Michael Portillo, or anyone else.**

**❾ ...er...**

**❿ ...that's it.**



HUSBAND



*"It's that idiot trampoline salesman again"*

# POETRY CORNER

**Lines To Commemorate The 50th Birthday of Prince Charles by The Poet Laureate in Waiting**

So. Your Royal Highness,
You are 50.

The whole nation rejoices
At this historic
Landmark.

You are a renaissance man
With your love of
Organic vegetables,
Watercolours of donkeys
In the moonlight,
And your imitations
Of
Neddy Seagoon.

The Old Man of Lochnagar.
That is another
Of your achievements.

And now you have shown
us
The way
With your "Full Monty"
Dance routine.

You are truly an inspiration
To creative artists
Everywhere.

What a pity
You will never
Be King.

Sir Eric Jervis Thribb O.M.


**10.00 Have I Got News For You**
Comedy quiz show hosted by Anus Deayton. (T) 49556

*TV & Satellite Week*

# Happy Ever After...

## A Sylvie Krin special from the Gatwick Collection by the author who brought you *Born To Be Queen*, *Heir of Sorrows* and *La Dame Aux Camillas*.

*The story so far: Charles is celebrating his 50th birthday at Highgrove Castle, and Camilla is the hostess. She has been allowed to plan everything — but there is one thing that even she cannot plan. Will this be the night?*

"HAPPY darling?" "Er, yes, I suppose I am, sort of." The future King of England expertly swung his radiant partner in a perfectly executed arabesque, to the strains of the Band of the Gulfstream Guards playing a selection of the Spice Girls Greatest Hits.

No matter what the world was thinking, she had never been happier.

She caught sight of herself in an exquisite 17th century Jean de Florette rococo mirror.

How stunning she looked! Of course the décolleté ball gown by the great New York designer Agnes D'Eayton looked magnificent. As did the platinum and emerald earrings, borrowed from the Victoria and Albert Museum by kind permission of Heritage Secretary Chris Smith.

But it was really her own inner sense of irrepressible joy which bubbled up, like the Nettle and Avocado organic bath foam that Charles had given her on her 50th birthday some years previously.

Tonight, she was the belle of the ball! Of that there could be no doubt!

As the couple swirled round the glittering ballroom, Camilla outshone all the other women present. "Her" guests could only look on in admiration.

There was the Princess Carlsberga of Denmark, supposedly the most beautiful woman in all Scandinavia; and there was the golden-haired Grand Duchess Nigella von Budweiser, clutching the arm of her handsome fiancé, Ernst van der Groelsch, the heir to the Dutch banking fortune.

There also were the Hon. Tara Boomdeay, in her pink PVC trouser suit, only that week voted "Britain's sexiest aristo" by the readers of OK magazine. And there was the ever-young Lucinda Camberwell-Green, who had so often accompanied Charles on his tours of Norfolk churches. And next to her one of the world's former leading supermodels, the svelte Stella Artois.

How plain they all seemed tonight, compared to their hostess! What was it that Charles's old friend and mentor Sir Laurens van der Pump had written in his book *Gardening in the Kalahari*? "It is better to pluck the flower in full bloom, than to snip it in the bud."

Charles had underlined this passage when he had given her the book for her 52nd birthday, and had written in the margin, "How true that is, how very true."

THE cabaret seemed to be going on for hours, thought Camilla, as she looked at her 8-carat gold Geraldo Rattner watch, a present from Charles on her 53rd birthday.

It was nearly midnight, and still the moment she had been waiting for all evening had yet to arrive.

As she straightened his bow tie at the start

of the evening, he had whispered "I'm quite nervous because I've got to say a few words at the end of the evening. You will be there to hear me, won't you, darling?"

"If only this comedian would finish," she couldn't help confiding to the distinguished guest at her side, who had introduced himself to her as "Sir David Frost, super to see you."

The figure on stage was putting on a succession of funny voices, to the delight of the audience, who could scarce contain their mirth.

"I don't *believe* it," the comedian was saying, in a slightly camp Scottish accent.

"Isn't he brilliant," whispered Charles, "when he does his Trevor Macdonald?"

At last the applause died away, and Camilla was sure that her big moment had come.

As the waitresses from the trendy Covent Garden restaurant Mossibros served organic champagne, expectancy burgeoned in her breast like a thousand butterflies emerging from their long winter of hibernation.

A hush fell on the room, broken only by Lord Soames, demanding to know when the second sitting for dinner was due, as he was "still starving after all that nut cutlet rubbish".

Then the band struck up with the theme tune from Jeeves and Wooster, and Sir Stephen Fry, the famous celebrity, strode onto the stage dressed as Oscar Wilde.

"Hullo, my dears," he said, with a naughty twinkle in his eye. "I want you all to raise your asses — whoops, I mean glasses! — to our birthday boy, Champagne Charlie. Bottoms up!"

Nearby the distinguished statesman Sir Peter Mandelson, shifted uneasily in his seat.

Then everyone stood to drink the loyal toast, while the band eased into the familiar strains of "Happy Birthday".

"Speech, speech," cried the delighted com-pany, led by "Auntie Margaret" as she rose unsteadily to her feet.

"Come on, Charlesh, get on with it, so I can go out in the garden and have a fag."

THE lights dimmed, and Camilla felt her heart pounding. At last the moment had come when finally all her dreams would come true for all the world to see.

There was a roll of drums as her Prince walked over to take centre stage in the spotlight.

"Your Royal High-nesses, my Lords, Ladies and gentlemen," he began, reading from his notes. "I'd like to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for coming here today, tonight, for what is a very historic occasion in my life."

"There is one very important thing I need to say to you all," Camilla leaned forward in her seat. She could scarcely bear the tension. Was her whole life about to change forever?

"But before I do that," Charles continued, "I'd just like to say a word of thanks to all the good ladies who've worked so hard behind the scenes to make this evening the tremendous success it has been.

"And now for that important announcement. Would the owner of the dark-blue Daihatsu Land Cruiser, registration number SH26 BXY kindly remove it from the front of the gate, as it is blocking the caterers' van and they want to go home."

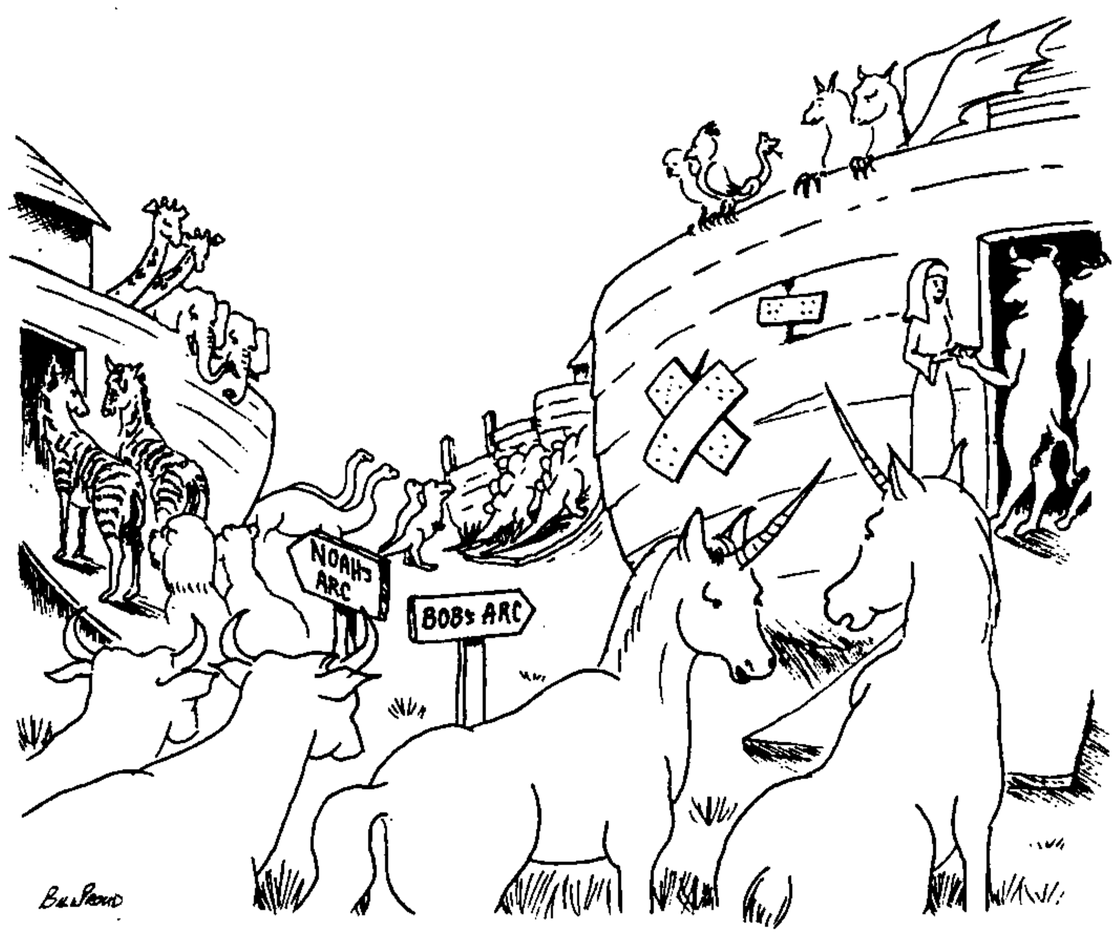
"Bugger the caterers," muttered Camilla through clenched teeth, as Crown Prince Haagen of Daasz hurried in embarrassment from the room, fumbling with his keys.

"What about me..."

# THOSE SADDAM THREATS — BLAIR GETS TOUGH

**1.** Now stop that or there'll be trouble.
**2.** I'm going to count to ten.
**3.** ...seven, eight, nine...
**4.** I'm serious you know.
**5.** If you don't stop that right now I'm going to get really angry.
**6.** It's not clever and it's not funny.
**7.** You wait until Mr Clinton gets home.
**8.** Right, I've had enough. Go and stand in the corner.
**9.** If you don't go to the corner, I'm going to have to smack you. I mean it.
**10.** Would you like to watch a video?

©The United Nations




*"Isn't it great! We've got so much more choice since privatisation!"*

# POST OFFICE UNVEILS MILLENNIUM STAMPS

**by Phil Ately**

**THE POST Office yesterday unveiled the set of 2000 stamps with which it is to mark the Millennium.**

Many of Britain's top artists, photographers and illustrators, from Ralph Stoddy to Damian Hirst, have been called in to provide designs commemorating the key events and personalities who over the past 2000 years have made Britain what it is today.

Subjects include:

### HISTORY

● Emily Parkhurst chains herself to railings outside Buckingham Palace, 1908.

● Oscar Wilde is arrested at Cadogan Hotel and sentenced to death, 1895.

● Black and White Minstrel Show taken off following public protests, 1972.

● Tony Blair wins election with huge support from Britain's gay, black and women's community, 1997.

### ARTS

● Anne Hathaway writes Shakespeare's plays, 1603.

● Dorothy Wordsworth writes Lyrical Ballads, including world-famous "Daffodils", 1798.

● Birth of Classic FM, 1992.

● Science: Invention of pop-up toaster by Sir Laurens van der Toast, 1903.

● Invention of tomato ketchup as peaceful by-product of splitting the atom, by Cambridge scientist Dr Heinz Beanz, 1931.

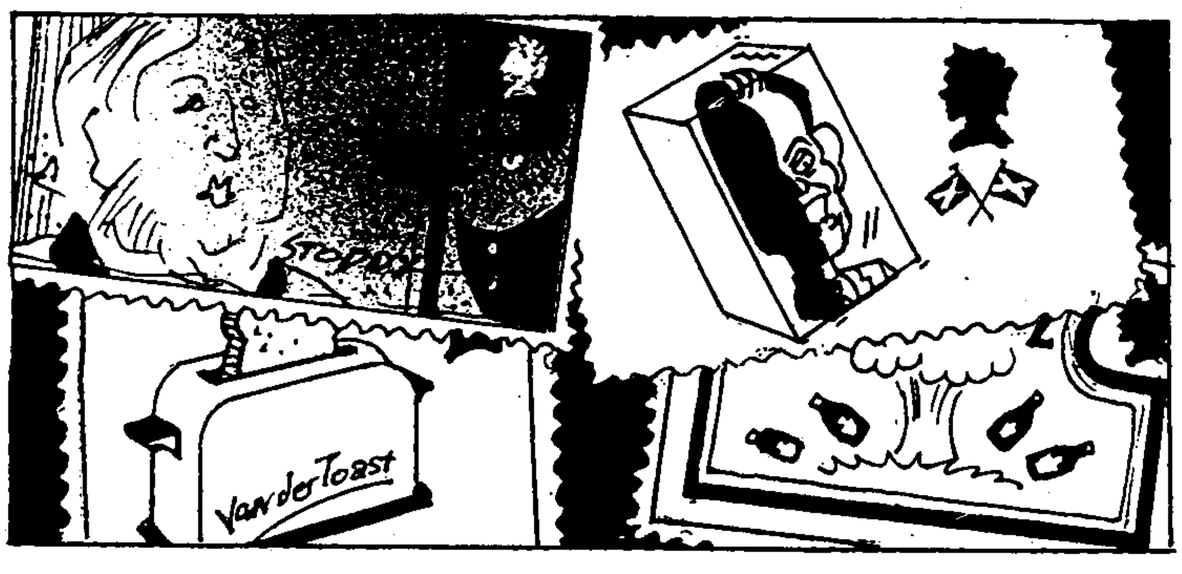
● First computer game, Pax-Man III, goes on sale in Birmingham, 1976.

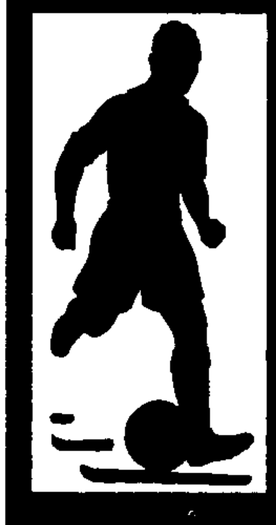
### POLITICS

● William Wallace becomes first Scottish prime minister, 1305.

● Tony Blair becomes prime minister of Scotland (and rest of UK), 1997.

● Sean Connery elected first Scottish President, 2000. *(That's enough stamps. Ed.)*



World of Soccer

# FURY OVER NEW-LOOK NEASDEN

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man Downloading "Steaming Dutch Dolly" from the Internet

**THE WORLD of soccer was in disarray last night following the decision by planning chiefs to allow the demolition of the famous "Twin Toilets" which for centuries have been a landmark to millions of fans (Sid and Doris Bonkers).**

The toilets which stand on either side of the South Terrace and are clearly visible from the North Circular Road will be demolished when the Neasden Bridge stadium is completely refurbished as part of the Millennium celebrations next year.

Said a jubilant chairman, local launderama magnate Brigadier Buffy Cohen: "We are delighted. The Squirrels have been languishing in the relegation zone for too long. Now under new management we can finally see light at the end of the tunnel, which the fans have unfortunately blocked with beer cans."

### Space to Let

But the decision caused an uproar. Said former Neasden netminder, the one-legged Sir Walton "Wally" Foot, "The twin toilets standing proudly against the North Circular skyline brought a lump to your throat when the coach turned the corner into Neasden Bridge Road.

"It was worth two goals to the Squirrels to play under the shadow of this famous example of our architectural heritage."

### Own Gals

Neasden fans were quick, too, to condemn the plans. Said Sid Bonkers, "These people are vandals to my mind. If I had a quid for every time I have written 'Big Ron is a git' on the wall and taken a toilet roll to throw at him as he leaves the park, I would be a very wealthy man today."

### Now Wash Your Hands

But last night the local architect responsible for the new look stadium, Mr Denys Cohen, brother of Club Chairman Brig. Sir Buffy Cohen OBE was adamant that the demolition would go ahead as planned.

Said Mr Cohen, "There is no room for sentiment, or indeed the toilets in the new look car park — I mean Sports Complex."

### Late Score

*European Cup Losers Trophy 2nd Leg*

Dynamo Kosavo .....4
(Sonovabich 3, (Pevsner o.g. 1)
Neasden .....0

# STORM GROWS OVER LEWINSKY BOOK

by Our Literary Staff **Bel Money**

**THE publishing world was rocked to its foundation by news that a £600,000 book deal had been signed last night about the relationship of Monica Lewinsky and Andrew Morton, a man described as "obsessed by cheques".**

The book will reveal how Lewinsky met with this man, the most powerful author in the free world, in a hotel room and immediately "had negotiations with him".

She apparently asked Morton to perform for her with a pen and paper. She then asked him to "simulate the writing act" .

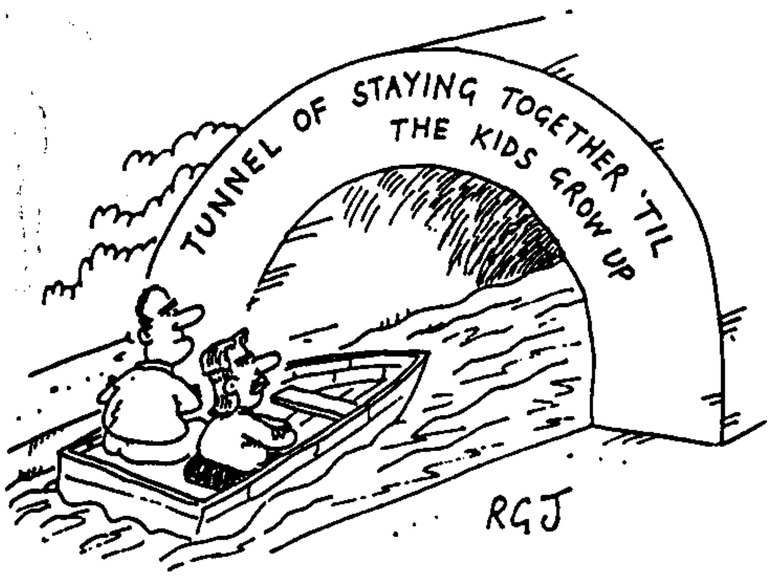
## Moneyca Lewinsky

This Morton was prepared to do, and later he had several telephone conversations with her.

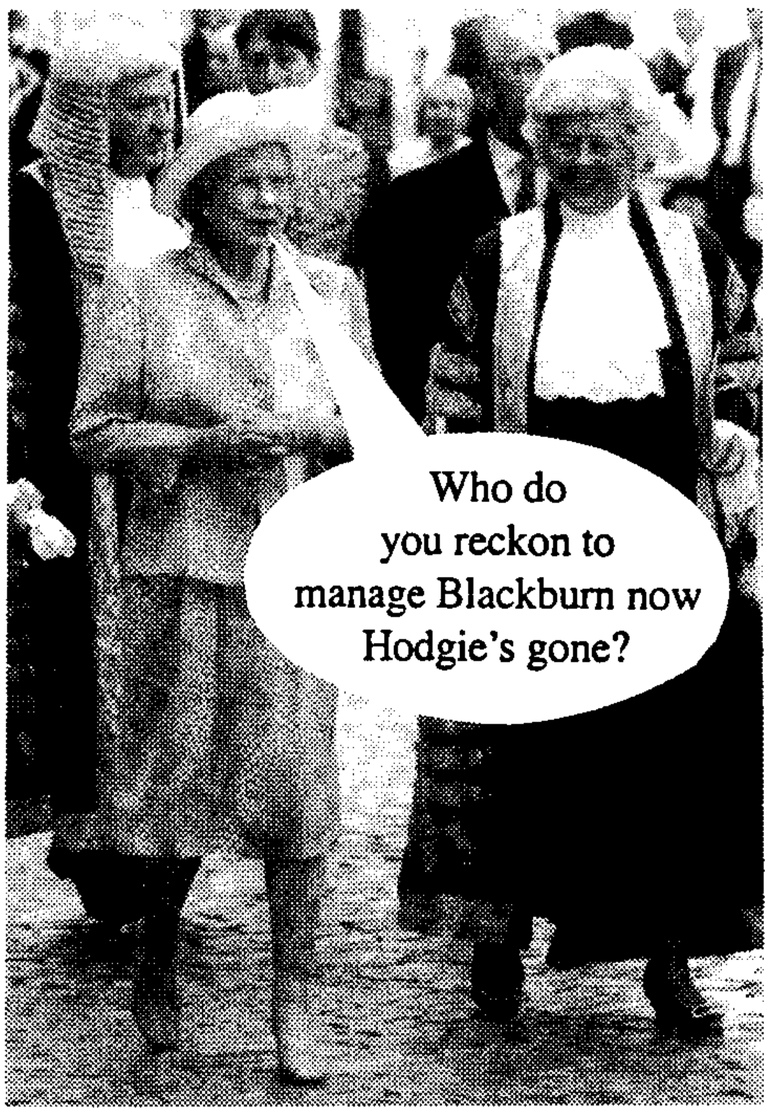
"I want you to talk filthy lucre," he is alleged to have said and the two of them discussed "oral cheques" at length.

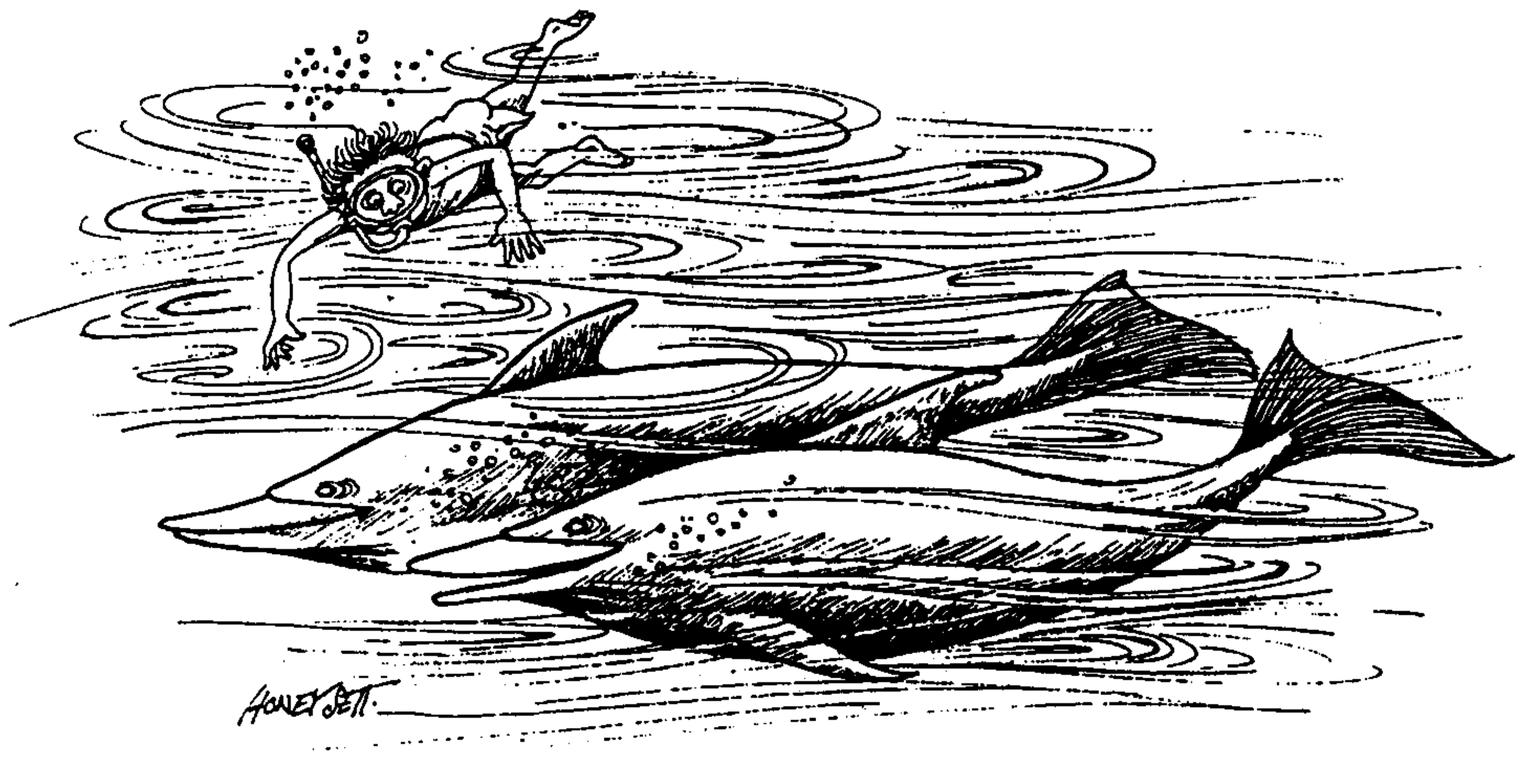
Morton denied any "inappropriate relationship" with Miss Lewinsky.

"She made a number of advances to me, but I haven't cashed them yet. At no stage has actual 'banking' taken place."




# NEW-LOOK QUEEN No. 94



*"And when they touch you, you get this wonderful feeling of stupidity and ignorance"*

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
## (Han-z-z-z-ard)

**House of Lords:** European Elections (How To Stitch Up) Bill *(47th reading)*

**Lord Mostyn of Williams**: My Lords, I beg to move this very simple Bill, which is intended to preserve democracy by ensuring that all Labour candidates are chosen by my Rt Hon friend the Prime Minister.

**Lord Cranberry of Sauce**: I can think of no greater insult to the democratic tradition of this country than that people should become our legislators when they have not been chosen by the electorate.

*(Tory cries of "What's the fella's name?", "Did you have the soup at luncheon?" and "Is Len Hutton still in?")*

**The Lord Chancellor, the Lord Lairg**: My Lords, I beg leave to take off my historic trousers and replace them with something more in keeping with the modern world that is New Britain, to wit one hand-tailored pair of plus-fours designed by Augustus Pugin.

*(Cries of "Get them off", "Have you no shame?" and "What about Mrs Dewar?")*

**Baroness Jay** (Leader of the House): Is it not disgraceful that in this day and age people should sit in this chamber simply because of who their father was?

**Lord Callaghas**: Well said, Margaret. That's my girl! They should give you a peerage.

**The Bishop of Neasden** (Rt Rev. Jim Flannel): My Lords, I find it positively immoral that, at the end of the second Christian millennium, people should become legislators simply because they are appointed by the Prime Minister, as I was.

*(Tory cries of "What do you make of this new chap Baldwin?")*

**Lord Jenkins of Bighead**: My Lords, as something of an expert on constitutional pwocedures, may I wecommend that the discwedited system of first-pass-the-port should be weplaced acwoss the board by a wather more wational and democwatic pwocess, namely the single alternative transfewable decanter system, or first-pass-the-clawet...

*(Bell sounds for vote. Lords wake up and rush through doors marked "Alive" and "Dead" into nearest bar)*

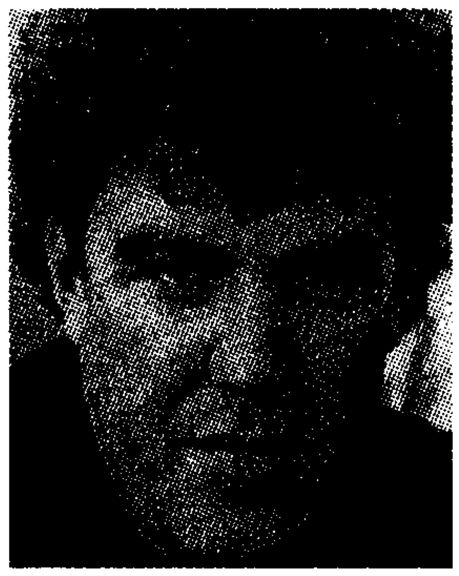
**The result of the vote was as follows:**

For the Blair Stitch-Up Bill: 196

Against Abolition of Hereditary Peerage: 756

Pheasants killed: 3,512 brace
(plus one woodcock)

# DIARY



JEREMY CLARKSON

So! Lawns! Aren't you just a little bit sick of lawns?!! Front lawns, back lawns — the lot! I mean — *all that grass!* And — *all that mowing!*

Frankly, what the hell's the point of growing grass if you have to cut the bloody stuff every few minutes! Blimey! If you never planted the stuff in the first place, you'd save yourself one *helluva lotta* bother!

Personally, I prefer a nice bitta *tarmac*. You can bounce a ball on it. Park your car on it. Roller-skate on it. And it doesn't grow! Save yourself a fortune in mowers!

Let's hear what Alan Titchmarsh has to say about my controversial opinion!

**Clarkson**: So, Alan! I hate lawns! Yup — I really hate them! They're so... *grassy*!! So what do you think about *that*, then!!!

**Titchmarsh**: Well, Jeremy, I rather like a nice lawn —

**Clarkson**: This bloke here says he actually *likes* a nice lawn!!! Blimey! What a world-class wally! To me, a nice lawn is just about as evil as Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin combined — and believe me, that's *pretty damn evil*!!!! To me, a nice lawn is just about as *truly ghastly* as a gorgeous bird who won't get her pants off for less than a tenner! So, Alan, what do you "like" about a nice lawn, then?

**Titchmarsh**: I suppose I quite like the look of it, and —

**Clarkson**: He quite likes the look of it! Hark at 'im! Blimey, to any *reasonably intelligent bloke* a nice lawn is just about as ugly as *an ugly bird* sitting in the middle of a *really ugly place* — somewhere *really ugly* like Venice, for instance!!!

**Titchmarsh**: But —

**Clarkson**: Thank you, Alan Titchmarsh!!!!

And talking of ugly places, I think most reasonable blokes would agree that Venice *just about takes the biscuit*!! Talk about revolting! I've seen prettier things than Venice crawling out from under a stone in an Essex sewer!

All that water, for instance! What's up with the Venetians, then?! Don't they know the first thing about road drainage?!!!!!

And I've never seen so many truly dreadful *old buildings*! Haven't those Italians ever heard of a nice lick of Dulux Emulsion Gloss?! And have you ever tried riding in a gondola?! A new-range SAAB XPG convertible it is not!

But what really bugs me about Venice is the total lack of cars! So you want to drive your brand new Jag SR6X with super-roll suspension and tail-lights to get any bird horny enough to give you five blow jobs in under the minute around the streets of Venice? Sorry, pardner, *no can do* — or as the spaghetti-guzzlers would no doubt put it — *"nonny! nonny! nonny!"* Yes — Venice is just about as ugly as my old gran's hairy armpit!!! City of Beauty? More like City of My Bloody Arse!

Okay, so let's talk about Oranges. Yup, that's right — the so-called fruit. I've gotta come clean. I Don't Like Oranges. There — I've said it! To me, the orange is just about as disgusting to eat as a dog's turd — and believe me that's *really saying something*!

For one thing, oranges are *so bloody ORANGE*! And they're so bloody *ROUND*!! Honestly, you'd think by now they'd've hired themselves a decent designer to make them square or *RECTANGULAR*!

And what about all that juice! Come on, girls — admit it! It reminds you of a bloke having a truly great time!! Yeah — that really puts the ORRR! into ORRRANGE! Let's talk to the head of The Orange Marketing Board!

**Clarkson**: So what do you think of my views about oranges, then!!! Pretty bloody *controversial*, eh?

**Head of the Orange Marketing Board**: Ha! Ha! Ha!

**Clarkson**: Are you honestly telling me that some people actually *LIKE* oranges??!! If an orange was an animal, it would be a *SLUG*!! And if an orange was a breakfast cereal, it would be one of those ones that *sticks to the bottom of the plate even after it's been washed up*!!! And if an orange was a fruit, — it would be an *ORANGE*!

**Head of the Orange Marketing Board**: Ha! Ha! Ha!

**Clarkson**: Thanks for letting us hear your worthless opinions! Great! You've been on a good sport! Great!! Now go away!! Great!!!

Why does cricket go on so long?

Why are mobile phones so irritating?!

How come when you drop a piece of toast it always lands on the buttered side?!

Have you ever noticed that the Italians take one helluva lot of care over their appearance — are they all gay, or what?!

Say what you like about the Queen, but I wouldn't do her job for all the proverbial tea in China!!

Has Geri Halliwell got big boobs — or what??!!

It never rains but it pours!

And believe me, too many cooks really do spoil that broth!

But my main controversial opinion this week concerns Shoes. Yup — *shoes*! Those horrible little things you wear on your feet! Some have laces — and a fat lot of good they area! And others are called "slip ons" — for the simple reason that if you leave them lying around you are bound to "SLIP ON" them!!! And they're no good for anything other than putting on your bloody feet! Have you ever tried wearing one on your head? You haven't? Well — don't try it, mate! Big mistake!! It quite simply *won't stay on*!!! Awkward little buggers, shoes. Have you ever noticed how dirty they get if you step in mud? Well, have you? Yet we're always being told how clean they are! Fat chance!! If a shoe was a world dictator, you can bet your bottom dollar it would be *Saddam Hussein*!

This week, I got my own back on Shitty Shoes by buying a whole load of them and then throwing them one by one into the wood-fired ovens at my local Pizza joint. Blimey, mate — you shoulda seen that *blaze*! And what about them French then — all garlic and onions. *And they don't even speak English*!!!!! And Shakespeare! What a load of old rubbish, eh? And Mozart! Urgh! Give me Dire Straits any day!

Great! Lovely! Smashing! How did I do?

# SUPERMODELS

KERBER

TROUBLE AT CHEZ JAGGER:
I DON'T WANT YOU IN THE MODELLING BUSINESS!!!
BUT DAD... WHY NOT?
YOU'RE 14 YEARS OLD.... I DON'T WANT YOU MIXING WITH THOSE OTHER YOUNG MODELS!
ARE YOU SCARED I MIGHT TAKE DRUGS?
NO, I'M SCARED YOU MIGHT CATCH ME COMING OUT OF ONE OF THEIR BEDROOMS.

**"I told John Fashanu the club was bigger than him and that it was time to move on," he said. "You get one bad egg and it upsets the apple cart."**

*Yorkshire Post*

**Menu**

Chef's choice Three Course Lunch including Coffee and Mice Pies

*Goddard Arms Hotel*

# Literary Review

## Cottage industry

**The Ossie Clark Diaries**
Ed. Lady Henrietta Rous
*(Bloomsbury, £20)*

HERE we have the ultimate diary entry: "2 September 1994, Wonderful shits." In its economy, clarity and essential truthfulness, it is nothing less than classic. Surely in all literature it is surpassed only by another of Ossie Clark's own entries, three days later, 5 September: "A really fabulous shit. 12" at least. Fluffy cotton-wool floater. The diet really seems to be working..."

Diaries are the coming thing. After the vogues for travel writing, biography and those silly little books about longitude and codfish, they're the only way to go. They promise pure disclosure and nothing else, the real hard stuff. So the gossipy ones, à la Woodrow Wyatt, consist essentially of saying "She said that X fucked Y". More direct versions simply say "I fucked X, I did."

We've all got a diary in us. And now that privacy is dead (did you hear? gang-raped and murdered in its bed, it was) there are going to be more and more of them printed forth, instead of mouldering quietly at the back of the drawer. As readers, we've all become the sort of creep who digs out other people's diaries while they're out of the house so as to get an eyeful of their secrets. This development looks unstoppable. But if anything can call a halt to this appalling trend, it will be the publication of The Ossie Clark Diaries. Because, for pointlessness, misery and squalor, they stand alone. Please God.

Ossie Clark was a dressmaker, popular in the sixties. He earned plenty of money, but he was a financial dimwit and spent most of his life bankrupt, sponging off others and the DHSS. Vain, selfish, a druggy, a drunk, an opportunistic bisexual, Clark saw all his relationships end horribly; his last lover, an Italian thug called Diego, murdered him. Like Joe Orton, without the talent.

To be sure Clark knew many famous people in the sixties and a contemporary account of those days might have had a certain period charm for those like Melvyn who still hanker after their youth (he did a massive South Bank Show special on Clark, after all). But, just to crown the futility of this volume, there aren't any diaries from the years of his success. Instead they begin in 1974 when his marriage and finances have already collapsed. From this low point they follow a steady trajectory downwards.

It's one long recital of drink, drugs, debt, theft, prosecution, promiscuity, disease and death. And these are the highlights. His editor, Lady Henrietta Rous — why she retains a title when other toffs venturing into authorship make do without is a question too sad to insist on — says: "Selecting from this mass of material has not been easy." Understandably. Once you started to chuck bits out because they were simultaneously boring and vile, you'd find you'd binned the whole thing before you could stop yourself.

Ladee Henrietta thinks otherwise. To her and her hapless publisher the book is "a gripping testament to a twentieth-century genius". She has dutifully annotated all the surnames that go with the first names and provided ludicrous introductions to each year: "We find him at peace in Ireland, where he spends his time collecting minnows with his son at the country estate of the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava."

Unfortunately the whole book is hopelessly mistranscribed and dumbly handled. Howlers and misprints abound. Thus: "His relationship wtih Celia improves on the surface during 1975." Her ladyship doesn't know that Fear Eats the Soul is a film, rather than an aperçu by her pet genius. When Clark refers to death in French, her highness thinks he's talking about some bloke: "I said I knew Albert found my constant preoccupation with Mort too heavy..." Her aristocratic attempts to annotate literary references provide the book's only light relief. Kafka's work is "often filled with proliferating beaurocracy [sic], tyranny, computers and the lies of politicians", don't you know. Moronically, she makes him say he is reading "Funeral Games by Mary Pienault". She can't read his handwriting and hasn't heard of Mary Renault either.

Not that Clark's own words are any great loss. His idea of eloquent lamentation, sad old hippy, is to write "HEAVY, HEAVY, HEAVY". Every time his own fecklessness causes him money problems he pathetically calls the letters he receives "dreadful", as if it's all their fault. "Dreadful letter from the bank". "A horrid letter from the mortgage people". "Dreadful letter from the Inland Revenue". And so on.

Depressing as all the stuff about Special Brew and pills and stealing and picking cigarette stubs off the pavement and Buddhist chanting is, it's the gay sex that's most thoroughly off-putting. Clark's exploits simply make all men look, as he would say, dreadful. There's no escape clause for complacent heterosexuals these days. Evolutionary biologists now tell us that the way gays behave with each other, on Hampstead Heath and Clapham Common and at a public toilet near you, is only the way straight men would behave with women, if women would let them. They would, you know.

It's a grim catalogue of indecencies, even when he's not getting crabs and herpes or "a sore anus". Despite having been married with two sons, he goes so often to Hampstead Heath he just calls it HH. "I met Peter on HH where I fucked a young nigger with a very large cock" is a typically scintillating entry. He keeps at it, despite flashes of shame. "I watched in horror, and repulsed by the smell of human shit, a drunk young man being savagely fucked. Thought of Aids. Tonight I did the same — fucked a guy, snorted his poppers, thought of the dangers of Aids."

The most memorable entry describes a rare moment of restraint from a prospective partner. "I picked a guy up — not young or handsome — and he asked if I had a place. We were on our way home when he caught sight of me — full face under a street lamp. `I don't think I'll bother,' he said."

Quite. The reader, by now halfway through Ossie Clark's Diaries, knows just what he means.

*"I'll be late home tonight — I've got a lot of paperwork to do"*

## MUSEUM NEWS

**NEIL CHALMERS, director of the Natural History Museum, was not a happy bunny when the last *Eye* detailed some of the fraud, theft and mismanagement that has plagued what was once one of Britain's finest museums.**

No one really knows how much was stolen by Stuart Beswick, deputy head of visitor services who was fired in July, because he was allowed to handle large amounts of cash over many years for which no proper record was kept.

Museum sources estimate that up to £100,000 may have gone astray. Guide books, for example, were sold at a table. The money went into a drawer without being rung up on a till, and at the end of the day was taken to Beswick's office. Investigators are also trying to unravel what happened to years of takings from the Tampax machine in the ladies, which were given to Beswick when the machines were emptied.

Money of course is not the only thing that can be stolen. Enough computer equipment has been nicked in recent years to stock a PC supermarket; geological specimens, including precious stones, have been trousered by staff and the thefts covered up; and last year the national audit office criticised the museum over maintenance work worth £1.8m being undertaken without contracts being signed, or only long after work had started. Three of the contracts involved the wildly overspent new Earth Galleries.

But Mr Chalmers now has other concerns following the recent "globe incident" in which a continent-sized piece of steel, big enough to kill someone, fell off the giant globe at the entrance to the Earth Galleries. A smaller piece — a metal bolt — fell off last week. The irony of having a model of the world falling apart at the heart of the museum has not been lost on staff.

## MUSIC & MUSICIANS

**SPARE a thought this week for Michael "I can do it" Kaiser, who has now taken over as executive director at the Royal Opera House.**

It remains to be seen if the old guard of the Garden can be brought under control by this New Yorker, whose plans include opening the new building to all and sundry — smelly trainers included.

Kaiser must have wondered what on earth he was getting into when he arrived at Heathrow only to find that the ROH had failed to organise his work permit and so he could not even gain entry to the UK on his first day in the job.

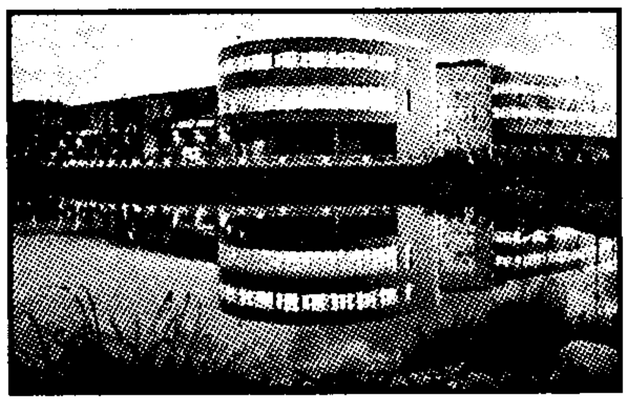
But then it's not often foreigners come to work in the opera and ballet world, er, is it?

*'Lunchtime O'Boulez'*

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
SNIPCOCK & TWEED BOOK LAUNCH PARTY
THESE THINGS ARE AN EXPENSIVE, POINTLESS WASTE OF TIME!
YOU'RE RIGHT! FORGET THE BOOKS - LET'S JUST HAVE PARTIES!
BOOK

# footnotes

# UP THE SWANWICK



*BESIDE THE LAKE, AMONGST THE TREES... The Swanwick Centre*

**THE exciting notion that the control of air traffic should be privatised caused a stir during last year's general election campaign, and transport ministers have been working hard ever since to bring it about. But the privatisation looks like being knocked out for this parliament thanks to one of those infuriating computer hitches which are forever mucking up the government's programme.**

*AUDITOR: Sir Donald*

The computer in question will control and monitor all air traffic in the south of England — perhaps the most crowded air space in the world. It was ordered in 1992 by National Air Traffic Services (NATS), an arm of the government's Civil Aviation Authority. The appointed contractor was an IBM subsidiary, later swallowed by the American engineering and arms firm Lockheed Martin. Work started at once on installing the computer at a purpose-built 70-acre "control centre" in a lovely nature reserve at Swanwick near Southampton.

The fixed price contract envisaged the computer being delivered by 1996, at a total cost to the taxpayer of £130m. For some time the Commons transport committee has been worried by spiralling costs (Lockheed has already been paid £216m and the total amount spent at Swanwick is £475m) and by delays which mean that the computer is unlikely to be up and running until 2003 at the earliest. Committee officers and backbenchers from all three parties demanded a "full independent audit" of the Swanwick project.

In July John Reid, the new minister of state for transport, announced that an audit would be carried out by DERA, a recently-privatised "evaluation and research agency". Whoops! *Computer Weekly*, which had asked a lot of awkward questions about the project, pointed out in September that DERA is "a major creditor and customer of National Air Traffic Services" and was listed by the CAA as one of its three main "related parties".

Then Reid named as chairman of the audit a former senior civil servant at the ministry of defence, Sir Donald Spiers. Whoops! Sir Donald has strong business connections with Lockheed Martin, the main contractor his audit is investigating. On 11 November Reid wrote a long letter to Tom Brake, Liberal Democrat MP for Carshalton and Wallington, who had put down a written Commons question about Sir Donald's interests. The letter confirmed that Sir Donald is chairman of a company whose helicopters are being fitted out by Lockheed Martin, chairman of another company which has a huge component contract with Lockheed Martin, and has just come off the board of another company which is Lockheed Martin's sub-contractor on the Swanwick computer contract. Reid concluded: "I do not believe that these links imply any conflict of interest or that Sir Donald's position as chairman of the DERA audit is in any way compromised."

The DERA audit report is not expected to be excessively critical of the Swanwick fiasco. Meanwhile, journalists who want to challenge the government and the contractors on this subject had better take care. When Tony Collins, an investigative reporter on *Computer Weekly*, questioned the costs of Swanwick last month, Bill Semple, NATS chief executive, wrote a long and angry reply, which the magazine duly published. This was followed almost at once by a letter to *Computer Weekly* from Mr Michael Skrein, partner of one of the City's most expensive solicitors firms, Richards Butler. The letter warned that the article was a libel and/or malicious falsehood on "our clients", the CAA, NATS and Mr Semple. "Should you publish further articles which are libellous", the letter ended, "our clients may not only sue in relation to future publications but also refer in such action to publications which have already taken place, for instance because they would be relevant to a claim of aggravated damages."

To its credit *Computer Weekly* has told Richards Butler and its clients, politely of course, to go and jump in a lake. But the lawyers' intervention proves that even if a computing system on which depends the whole future of air safety in the south of England might be costing far more than predicted and might be delayed for at least seven years, the reputation of the government body responsible and its multi-million pound contractor will be rigorously protected.

## THOSE MEP EXPENSES: THE THINGS THEY SAY

**TORY**

*"I do not think taxpayers are interested in the slightest in my expenses. I will not release my accounts because it would be open to abuse. In any case, I do not regard myself as being paid to spend my time looking at my expenses."*

*Tom Spencer, Tory MEP, Surrey.*

**LABOUR**

*"I pay thousands of pounds every month on travel expenses. But I can't say how much. It is hard to keep track of your expenses when you are paid in ECUs or whatever they are called nowadays. As long as my account is not in the red, I can keep on spending."*

*Anita Pollack, Labour MEP, Kingston and Richmond.*

*Surrey Comet*, 6 November

# BLAIR'S BOOBIES

**A FRONT page article in the *Times* on 12 November, which had all the marks of an official Downing Street leak, "revealed" that Tony Blair is looking for a "business candidate" for the job of London mayor.**

The article named only two men of the type being sought, both chief executives: Robert Ayling of British Airways and Martin Taylor of Barclays Bank.

Mr Ayling has just come back from Prague where he has been showing the sort of flair the prime minister hankers after. According to *BA News* (6 November) "a hundred and fifty British Airways Central European people gathered in Prague for two days of work, play and participation in 'Circus Central Europe, a theme conference designed by Justin O'Brien, Creator and Artistic Interpreter.' Justin said: 'Central Europe has a rich tradition of circus — and we felt the circus themes of teamwork, extensive preparation, hard graft and all-encompassing fun really suited our area and people.'"

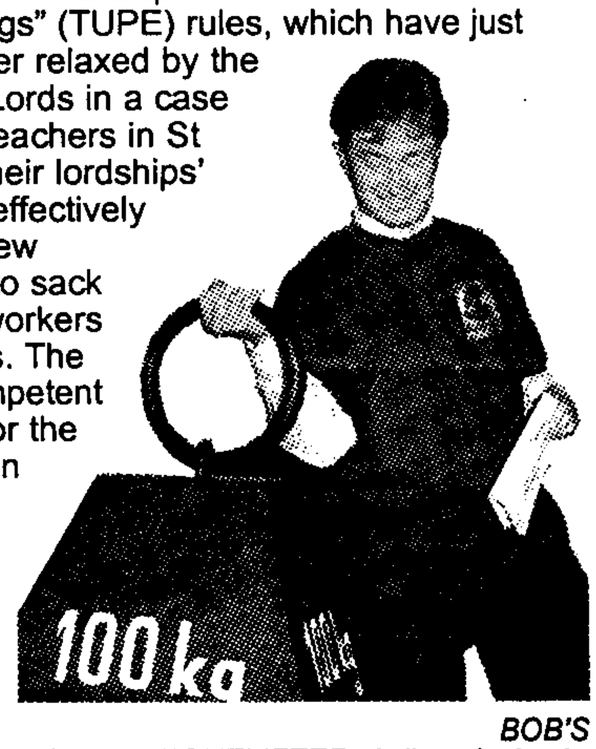
The report went on: "During breaks during the sessions circus performers mingled with delegates teaching juggling and hula-hooping. A Prague photo-treasure hunt with a corporate goal theme was equally popular." The highlight of the two days, however, was the flying visit of chief executive Bob Ayling and his speech on "one world", which was reported to be "electric".

A slightly less successful trip for Mr Ayling was his recent foray to the United States where he was told that his ambitious plan to merge with American Airlines faced a long investigation by US regulators. An "analyst" quoted in the *Financial Mail on Sunday* (16 November) was quoted as saying: "A few months ago I reckoned Ayling was secure. Now I'm not so sure."

Meanwhile Blair's other business candidate Martin Taylor was doing what he knows best — infuriating UNIFI, the trade union which represents bank workers. In a press release the union savaged Barclays for flogging off its long-standing tax advice unit at Peterborough. The unit was sold in February to SEC, a financial services firm and renamed Taxguard.

Nine months later Taxguard sacked 19 of the 37 Taxguard staff (19 is the maximum number of workers an employer can make redundant without consulting the union). If the 19 had still been working for Barclays they would have been eligible under the bank's relatively generous redundancy scheme. One of the sacked men, aged 54 with 29 years service would have got £89,463. Instead, Taxguard agreed to pay only the statutory redundancy pay. The man with 29 years' service gets £5,830. Unifi points out that at the time of the takeover Barclays and SEC threatened not a single redundancy.

LEGAL FOOTNOTE: The sackings were legal under the European "transfer of undertakings" (TUPE) rules, which have just been further relaxed by the House of Lords in a case involving teachers in St Helens. Their lordships' judgment effectively allows a new employer to sack as many workers as he likes. The highly competent barrister for the employer in that case was Cherie Booth QC, wife of the prime minister.




*BOB'S YOUR WEIGHTLIFTER: Ayling playing in*

# High Principals

# HAPPY VALLEY

**GREAT scenes of rejoicing have been cheering the dreary corridors of Thames Valley University, where staff have been seen to embrace each other and even to skip and jump for joy. Such scenes follow the resignation on 12 November of the university's vice-chancellor Mike Fitzgerald.**

No further education establishment in Britain has conformed more closely to New Labour than Thames Valley University. TVU was formed in 1992 from a merger between colleges in Ealing and Slough, and was blessed with New Labour controllers even before New Labour became fashionable.

Vice-chancellor Fitzgerald boasted a bizarre haircut and paid-up membership of the Labour party. The chancellor was millionaire publisher Paul Hamlyn, one of Labour's most generous donors. The two men quickly established their New Labour credentials by bashing the unions. One early result was a 1993 ballot on the issue "do you have confidence in the vice-chancellor?" 12 voted yes, 181 no. (See *Eye* 825)

Encouraged by the vote Fitzgerald set about establishing what he called the "New Learning Environment", whose aims were set out in New Labour babble. For instance: "To develop resource based learning as a substitute for, rather than an addition to, traditional teaching and learning strategies." In plain English this meant replacing human teachers with computers, and dividing curricula into "modules" which could by-pass lecturers and be picked up on computers by rote. That way the university could take on more students, and therefore get more money, and employ fewer humans.

*EX-VICE-CHANCELLOR FITZGERALD*

The strategy led to antagonism between executives and lecturers and bouts of sporadic industrial action. None of this deterred two distinguished visitors to the university in late 1996: the new Labour leader Tony Blair and his education shadow spokesman David Blunkett. The visit was broadcast on television, and the general good cheer was only marginally spoiled by an exchange between Blunkett and the 13-year-old son of vice-chancellor Fitzgerald who had been hauled along to savour the occasion:

Q: How old are you?

A: Thirteen, sir.

Q. Why aren't you at school?

No reply.

By the autumn of last year the examination system in the New Learning Environment had almost completely collapsed. The *Sunday Times* (26 October 1997) ran a story headlined UNIVERSITY DUMBS DOWN ITS DEGREES, revealing that examiners had "effectively dropped the pass mark for work from 40 percent to 30 percent and permitted students to fail almost half their courses over a year but still continue their degrees". Dr Martin Roiser, a NATFHE representative, was quoted as saying: "There is serious dumbing down going on."

This quote led to a threat of a writ for libel — the first ever from a college to a trade union representative. In a long letter on 3 November last year, Eversheds, the City solicitors who have secured so much work from the "new" colleges, complained that the remark was "gravely defamatory" of the university and threatened "proceedings in the high court" unless Roiser signed an utterly grovelling apology. Since the apology admitted to bringing the university into disrepute, it would have led to Roiser's instant dismissal. Advised by his union, the lecturer showed the proverbial two fingers to the lawyers and no writ ensued.

Instead, a few days later the newly-formed Quality Assurance Agency was invited to investigate the university. The QAA's devastating report was published this month. The New Learning Environment, it revealed, has led to "disgruntled and disbelieving external examiners, some of whose reports we consider to be serious indictments of the university as a degree-awarding body".

The report went on: "During the course of our review we found evidence that the university may have lost sight of some basic principles of quality assurance which should be commonplace in an institution with degree-awarding powers."

In short, the report exposed widespread dangers of dumbing down. It recommended urgent action. It was immediately and embarrassingly obvious that the first action in the plan would have to be the resignation of the vice-chancellor, which was greeted with tumultuous exultation.

# SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

The Economist

"Economists may sometimes seem about as useful as a chocolate tea-pot, but as this year's Nobel prize for economics shows, it isn't always so. On October 14th, the $1m prize was awarded to two Americans, Robert Merton of Harvard University and Myron Scholes of Stanford University. Their prize-winning work involved precisely the sort of mind-boggling mathematical formulae that usually cause non-economists either to snooze or scream. That is too bad, for it ranks among the most useful work that economics has produced. Their work on how to price financial options... turned risk management from a guessing game into a science."

— *The Economist*, 17 October 1997.

The Economist

"Like the Titanic, Long-Term Capital Management was supposed to be unsinkable. The hedge fund's dramatic downfall and bail-out last week was the stuff of Hollywood disaster movies: fortunes laid waste, proud men (Nobel laureates no less) cut down to size, giant tidal waves threatening to drown some of Wall Street's snootiest institutions... At the very least, Wall Street's finest were blinded by the reputations of LCTM's founders who included... Robert Merton and Myron Scholes, who last year shared the Nobel prize for economics for their contributions to the understanding of financial risk."

— *The Economist*, 3 October 1998.

# Doing a runner

**When Sheila Boyde wrote to the *Eye* last summer, she was not overcome with admiration for solicitors. She was a marathon runner in the 1990 Commonwealth Games and in 1992 was hoping to get into the British Olympics team when her marriage started to break up.**

In 1994, she consulted Paul Dumbleton a solicitor in Ripon, who quickly persuaded her he was just the man to help her through her divorce settlement, especially, he added tactfully, since she was so obviously naive. A year later, he was still regaling her with assurances about his own brilliance when he suddenly fled his offices taking with him £40,000 which he had been paid as part of the divorce settlement by Sheila's former husband. In 1996, a judge awarded her the whole sum against Dumbleton, who was bankrupt and couldn't pay. So she went to another solicitor, Mr Paul Cottenham of Leeds, who sent her case to the Solicitors Compensation Fund which is run by the Law Society.

*SHEILA BOYDE*

A year later, when she wrote to the *Eye*, she still hadn't had a penny. The *Eye* contacted the Compensation Fund. Two months later, it was the *Eye* who first broke the news to her that she had been awarded £35,600 from the Fund, plus legal costs, plus interest. The £35,600 was paid by cheque to Mr Cottenham, her solicitor. She rejoiced. Then she got a letter from Mr Cottenham saying the legal costs did not include the work he'd done for her between February and August 1997. He took £3,449.87 out of her money to pay for that. "I propose," he added, "to hold a further £1,175 to cover the costs which may not be recoverable from the Law Society." So she only got £30,966 — nearly £5000 less than the sum she'd been awarded, and she's still waiting for the interest.

# HE HAD A DREAM...

**ONE way to get a job in education at Calderdale, Yorks, is to understand the employment situation from the inside.**

Not long ago (*Eye* 961), we featured the case of Simon Jenkin, who wrote so blistering a report about education in Calderdale that the director, Ian Jennings, had to resign. His job was taken over temporarily by, er, Simon Jenkin.

Recently a special panel has been interviewing likely candidates for the lucrative post of project director in a planned new "education action zone". A leading member of the panel was Peter Bartle, Calderdale's chief education adviser.

The panel interviewed about 50 candidates and couldn't find one suitable. Then Mr Bartle had a vision. He told the *Halifax Courier*: "I woke up at about four in the morning with the thought in my mind about what a learning zone might be and out of those thoughts came the thought that I might apply for the job."

He did, and he got the job at once without any more advertisement or fuss.

*You can write to Paul Foot at Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183*

# In the City

A DOCTOR WRITES: *"I am increasingly asked: if I wear a dress in court, will I get off? And the answer is: only if you are charged with unmanly offences like fraud. But do consult your fashion consultant as to the best way to put your message across. And remember: courts are full of men in wigs."*

Like the rich, white collar criminals are different. Those who rob with the pen and not the gun can do the crime but not the time. So, as the police know from day one who the suspect suits are and may well have voluminous documentary evidence, it is necessary to rely on more unusual defence strategies. Which is why mad-not-bad is becoming increasingly fashionable. Furthermore, playing the mental illness card works. Ask Ernest Saunders, Roger Seelig and Judge Gee.

The road which led to the Peter Young circus at the City of London magistrates' court two weeks ago has already been successfully travelled by all three defendants with "get out of jail" cards. Former Guinness chairman Saunders had his sentence halved because the court of appeal was persuaded he had irreversible pre-senile dementia, or Alzheimer's disease. Relieved of the stress of prison time, Saunders made a miraculous recovery.

*YOUNG: Peter or Elizabeth?*

His fellow defendant Seelig, seen by many as the architect of the illegal Guinness share support operation for which Saunders and others went to jail, escaped joining them when his trial had to be halted because he had an apparent mental breakdown brought on by his decision to defend himself. A few courtroom histrionics plus f-words and, hey presto, prison vanished. Within months Seelig — who, like Young, worked for bankers Morgan Grenfell — was smiling again and back in business. Seeing the back of a courtroom is a wonderful cure for depression and stress, it seems.

Judge Richard Gee was so stressed at the thought of facing a retrial for mortgage fraud that he had to be relieved of this burden by the compassionate attorney-general. Not surprisingly this therapy immediately banished all suicidal thoughts from the judge's mind and he can now contemplate comfortable early retirement with a £500,000 pension pay-off.

There can be few greater causes of depression for former City high-flyers than getting caught and facing prison. But if depression were an excuse, then there would be no overcrowded prisons. However, it is not sufficient to merely claim to be mad or suffering from mental illness. After the uproar over Gee it is necessary to leave no room for doubt.

Why Peter/Elizabeth/Tracy Young made his first court appearance as a somewhat unconvincing woman when facing charges over a £200m fraud is a matter which will no doubt be the subject of the anticipated fitness-for-trial hearing expected next year. Especially as his estranged wife says he had never appeared in public like that before. Equally puzzling was the "in your face" floral dress: why not trousers or even his previous uniform of a pinstripe suit — a not unknown female fashion?

What of course his appearance did guarantee was massive publicity and a mini-riot when Young exited the court as photographers fought to snap "Elizabeth". This ugly scene could have been prevented if Young had posed for photographs as requested. But this was refused thereby ensuring what duly happened.

But is a defendant's dress necessary evidence of madness any more than talk of a sex change operation? Cross-dressing is all the rage in some circles, including those of a well known newspaper baron. And because someone is confused about their sexuality, does that make them unfit to be tried on unrelated matters? Ron Davies was running Wales! Transvestites appear in court.

If a man can be allowed to decide to have a sex change operation, why is he unable to understand court proceedings regarding his own actions two years ago? Supposing he had such an operation, would that make him fit to be tried at a future date wearing a dress? All this may become clearer once the medical evidence is public of Young's mental state and his ability to understand criminal proceedings and give instructions — the test in order to face trial.

The most recent case of a high profile defendant declared unfit to be prosecuted was the accused Nazi war criminal Szymon Serafimowicz. He was a frail 85 year old who died within a year of the 1996 decision. Interestingly, unlike Young — whose address cannot be given for legal reasons — everyone knew where this mass-murderer lived. But then he was not charged with fraud and favoured shabby raincoats rather than floral dresses.

MORE profitless prosperity from the Branson business empire. V2 Music (Holdings), the grinning pullover's new record business, has just filed its results for the year to June. It managed to lose £35.7m on sales of £14m!

This remarkable achievement no doubt helps explain the need for the £70m financing last May. After two years losses have already topped £51m. With so many losers eating money, no wonder the City shares the same lack of enthusiasm for Branson as Virgin train passengers.

THE ever happy-to-help Elliott Bernerd is facing possible embarrassment over the financial affairs of his longtime property associate Paul Bloomfield.

Creditors of "Boom Boom" are less than happy over his performance after promises to repay them the near £60m he owed enabled Bloomfield to avoid a second bankruptcy with an individual voluntary arrangement in 1992. Bloomfield promised to pay 50p in the pound over five years. But in typical bullish style he declared: "I will be very unhappy if within the five-year period they do not receive a pound in the pound."

But it is his creditors that are unhappy. It appears "Boom Boom" entered into a deal with two of his biggest creditors, Credit Suisse First Boston and Lonrho, in June 1997. He had given a £7.2m personal guarantee to Credit Suisse and owed Lonrho £10m over two property deals which went bad. The balance of these debts — possibly around £1m — were assigned to a company named Rootsville which promised to repay. Sadly this seems not to have happened.

Now the bankers and Lonrho are pressing Bernerd to ensure that "Boom Boom" and Rootsville comply with their obligations. Quite unfairly they claim they would never have done the Rootsville deal if the wannabe peer had not suggested they would be paid.

LIKE his subjects, biographer Tom Bower suffers from memory problems (see Letters). The following extracts also come from transcripts of the Rowland v Fayed hearing.

*October 26, day one of the trial...* which ended when Fayed capitulated and submitted to judgment for breaking into his rival "Tiny" Rowland's safe deposit box at Harrods. Christopher Moger QC, counsel for Rowland's widow Josie, told Mr Justice Bell:

"The first matter that will have to be dealt with tomorrow is the return of a subpoena issued against Mr Tom Bower, a journalist to whom documents were sent by the defendants. That was originally listed... for an early return on October 9. Mr Bower attended, did not produce the documents the subject of the subpoena, gave evidence which was contradictory about whether he actually had them and notified the court he intended to take a Section 10 Contempt of Court Act protection of sources point."

Moger continued:

"It is now plain and in fact in the course of these proceedings now admitted that Mr Bower was sent copy documents from the box by the defendants between March and July 1996."

Moger explained he wanted to question Bower about these documents because "he was ordered by the deputy judge to swear an affidavit, because he did not produce any documents on the last occasion in, as I said, disobedience of the subpoena".

*October 27...* Bower appeared in court. Moger wanted to know about documents from the box used by Bower for an August 1996 *Sunday Times* article which suggested Rowland had been blackmailed by the former spy Dusan Popov.

Q: What I want you to do please is to tell my lord whether of any of the documents described in this schedule to the subpoena you are able to identify a document you have had in your possession.

A: My problem is it is a long time ago and I do not have the documents and although clearly I had documents or copies of documents and clearly the pay-in slip came from the bundle of documents or copies of documents that I had I cannot from your schedule because it is so long ago say which featured and which did not.

Q: Tell me Mr Bower when you disposed of the documents that you had from the source that gave rise to the article?

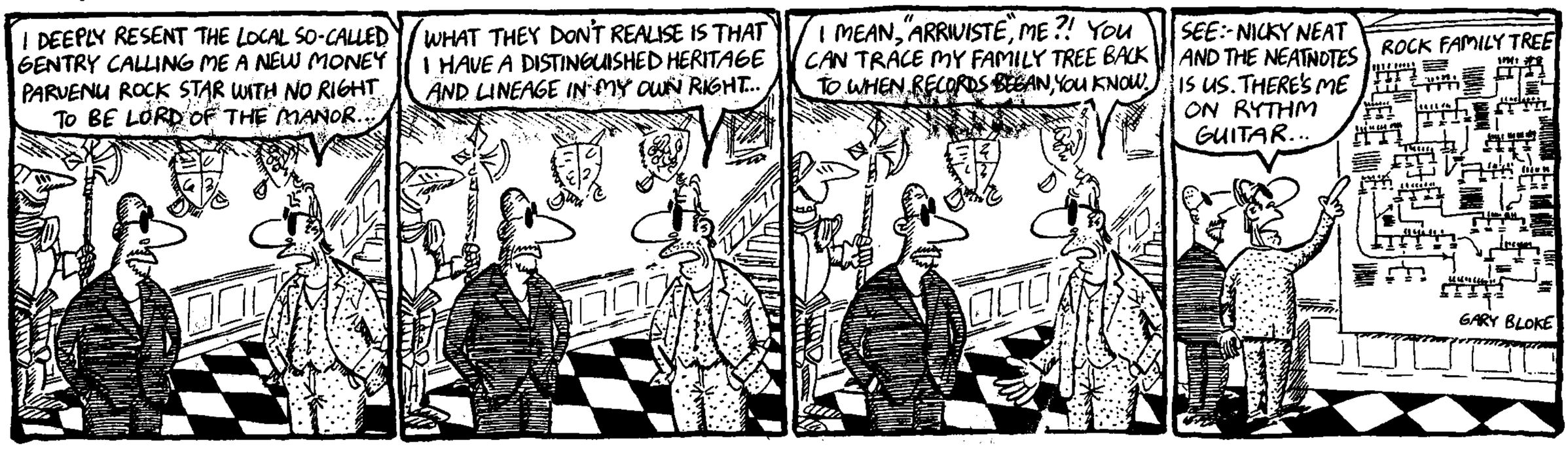
A: I just do not know. As you know I was interviewed by an officer at Scotland Yard and he asked me then.

Q: Was it before or after that you disposed of them?

A: That's the problem. I do not know. At that stage I went to look for them and I could not find them. I have an enormous number of documents... I just cannot remember what happened to them.

Celeb

LIGGER


I DEEPLY RESENT THE LOCAL SO-CALLED GENTRY CALLING ME A NEW MONEY PARVENU ROCK STAR WITH NO RIGHT TO BE LORD OF THE MANOR..
WHAT THEY DON'T REALISE IS THAT I HAVE A DISTINGUISHED HERITAGE AND LINEAGE IN MY OWN RIGHT..
I MEAN, "ARRIVISTE", ME?! YOU CAN TRACE MY FAMILY TREE BACK TO WHEN RECORDS BEGAN, YOU KNOW.
SEE:- NICKY NEAT AND THE NEATNOTES IS US. THERE'S ME ON RYTHM GUITAR...
ROCK FAMILY TREE
GARY BLOKE

# The leading voice in Britain

The Express carried the following leaders in the last three months.

## age of consent

**time to end inequality and lower the age of consent**

Since the consensus is that heterosexual men and women are capable of sufficient maturity at 16 to have sex, then there are no grounds for preventing homosexuals from doing so. Such discrimination has no place as we approach the millennium and today's vote will be a small but important step in modernising Britain.

## single parents

**lecturing on morals will not cure society's ills**

The Government-backed Institute for the Family must take care not to become a moralising, patronising institution. While the Government may want to encourage two-parent families, it is not its place to dictate that this is the "best" way to bring up children.

## the lords

**blair must not bow to peer pressure on vital reforms**

If the peers are after a fight, they should be given one. Their case is non-existent and the Government should show up their wrecking efforts.

## sink estates

**save sink estates from going down the plughole**

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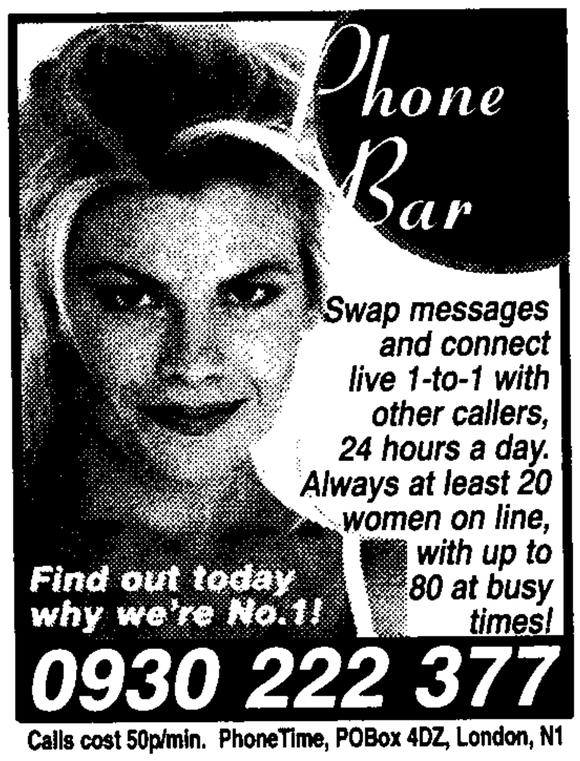

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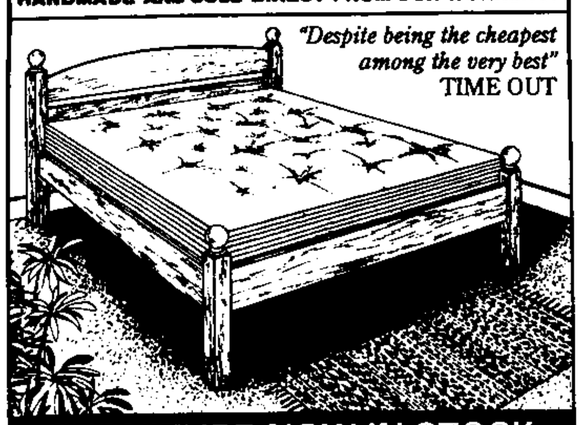

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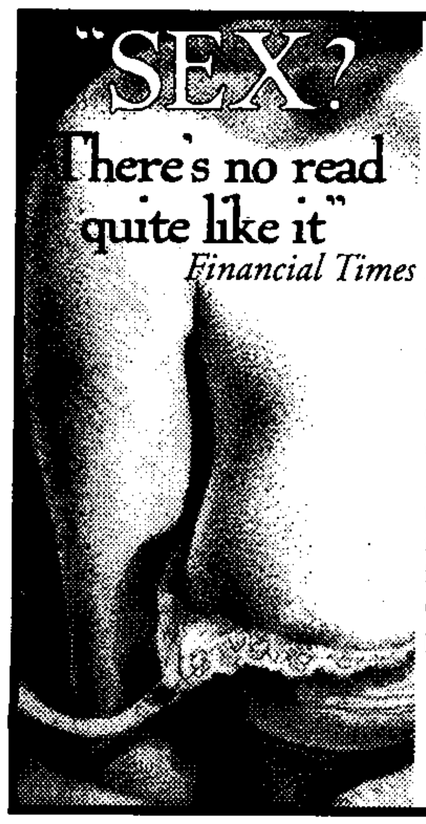


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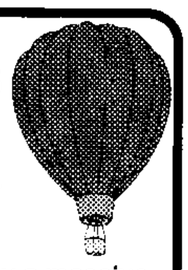

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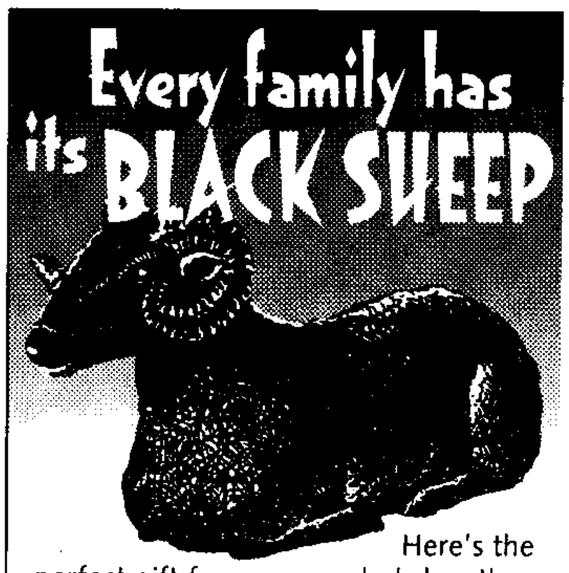

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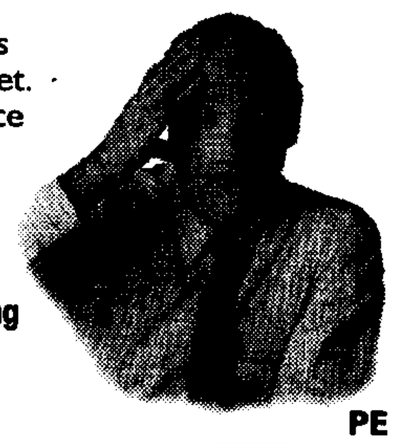

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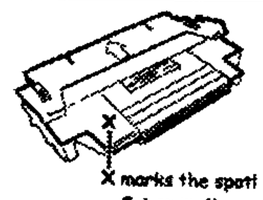


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**SPEECHWRITING** by Mitch Murray – see page 30.

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**£500 NEEDED** to save landrover and life – please help! Halifax 11-16-23, 07568031.

**PLEASE SUPPORT SCREENWRITER** – £5116.28 completion film/debt. Please help. Forever thanks. Barclays 20-10-53, 50824879.

**FUNDING DISASTER.** £2700 overdraft. Save history PhD. Please! Midland 40-35-34, 81703382.

**PLEASE HELP** – £5,000 needed towards Finance Msc. Box 1064.

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**MUSICIAN – HUGE DEBT**, stultifying job, seeks funds to fulfil her potential and start living again. 20-84-58, 60191760. Tel: 0378 410862.

**PLEASE HELP DAD** keep us all together. Abbey National X8729683PAR.

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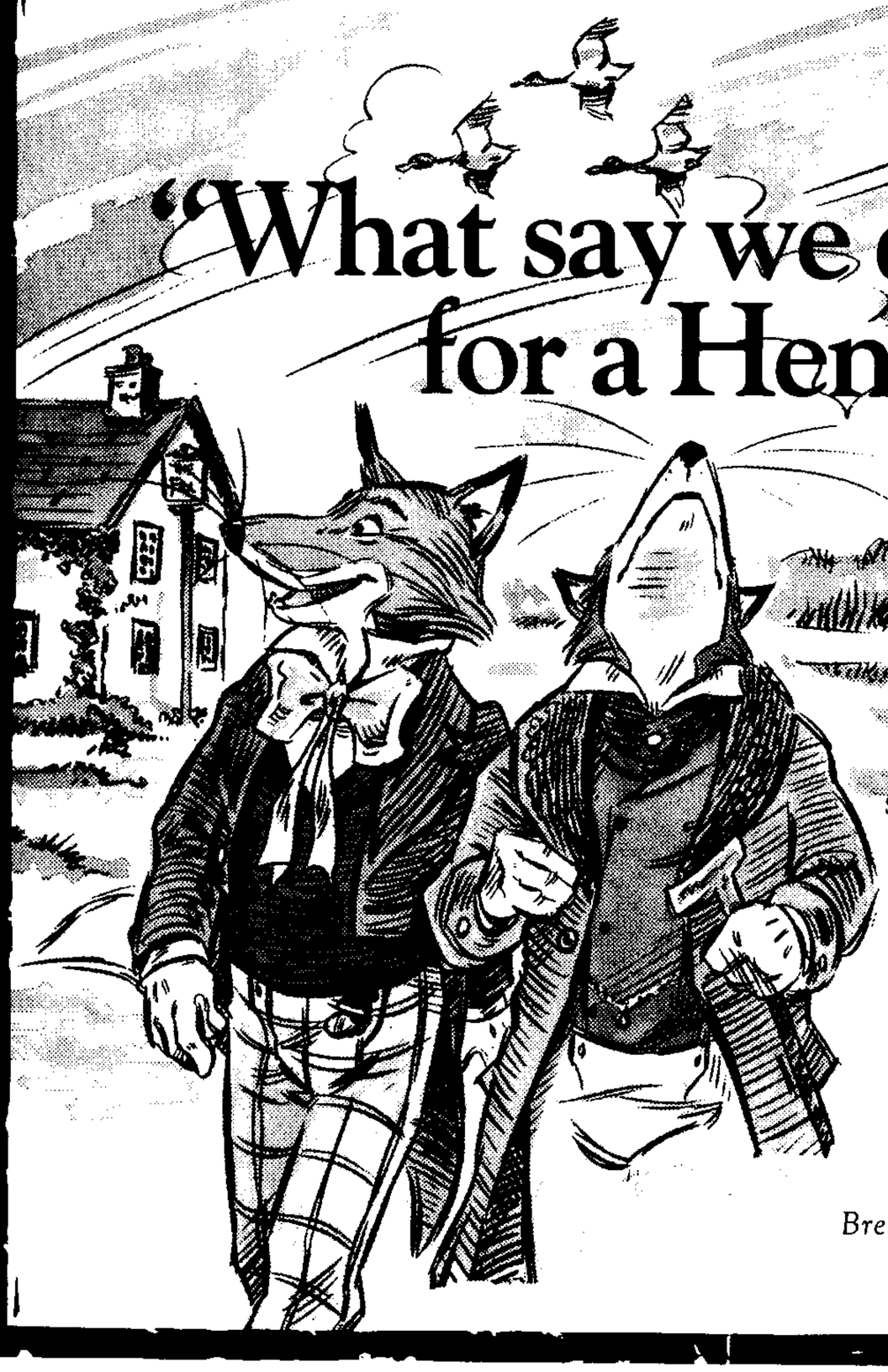
# "What say we duck inside for a Hen?"



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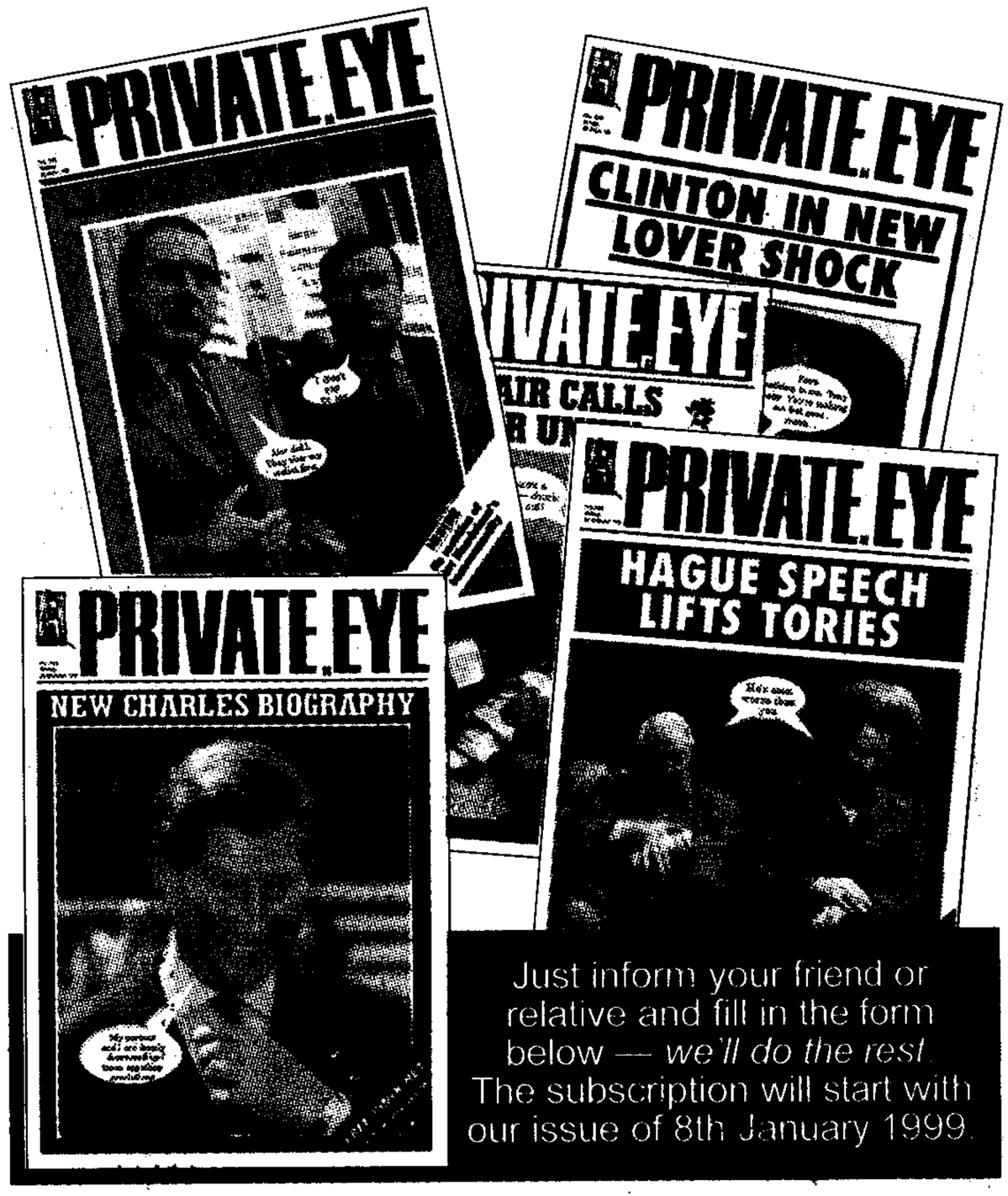


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